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# When the Turtles Sing

BY DON MARQUIS
Author of "The Old Soak," "Sonnets to a Red-Haired Lady," etc.

"The time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land."
—*The Song of Solomon*, 2 : 12.

"THIS world," said the Old Soak, "would be a good deal better place if the days and ways of them old-time peetryarchs the Good Book speaks of was to come again."

And yet Mr. Hawley did not appear wholly displeased with this world; he spoke with the air of one who has been thinking profoundly, but not bitterly, of humankind. He was in his favorite seat on the veranda of Jake Smith's Palace Hotel, at the shady end. His feet were on the railing. His corn-cob pipe was purring sweetly. Outside him and round about him were the drowsy, pleasant life of the little town and the shimmer and shadow of a perfect summer day. Inside him was a golden warmth induced by a sample of one of Jake Smith's more successful importations which had boasted on its label that it came from the land of Burns. Poetry was in the Old Soak's eye, poetry and benevolence and the promise of narration. I put my feet beside his on the railing and prepared to assimilate wisdom.

"If I was to wake up to-morrow morning with a crown onto my head and a skepter in my hand and find myself the Umpire of the entire human universe," said Mr. Hawley, "my first commandment would be for everybody to go right back to the early days of the world. Them old peetryarchs was big and liberal in their elements and idears. They figgered that life was too short to waste it all in work. Just because Methuzalem lived a thousand years was no sign that everybody else would. Eat, drink, and be merry, says they, for in five or six hundred years mebby we're gonna die. We're here to-day, they says, and gone in a few centuries; let's whoop her up while the whoopin's good!

"One of them peetryarchs would set up on his ivory throne with his flocks and herds around him, and his men-servants and maid-servants and oxen and asses and camels even to the third and fourth generation of posterity, and his wives and children and captives and conquered-bines, and all the in-laws and outlaws that went for to make up a tribe of them Bible beegats, and pass out judgments for an hour or so every Monday morning, just to get business out of the way for the week. And him and his soothsayers and interrupters of dreams and medicine-men would pull wise cracks on each other and proverbs and ketch-questions and riddles for another hour, mebby. And by noon on Monday he would be tired of it and say: 'Well, that's that! Is anybody gonna be five hundred years old this week? If there is we'll pull a feastivity that will last a month and crack every welkin 'twixt Dan and Burrsheba!' And usually there was somebody at least a hundred that week, but if nobody was he would ask: 'Can anybody think of some other good reason to have a barbecue?' Mostly they could, but if they couldn't he would say: 'Just for the sake of argument,

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can any of you think up any reason why we *shouldn't* have a barbecue?' And nobody ever could. And if a stranger was to wander along out of some poor ignorant heathen land and ask: 'Chief, you mean a reg'lar barbecue, or a prohibition barbecue?' he would take down the golden jug from his lips and wipe his foamin' beard onto his sleeves of purple and fine linen and say: 'What in blazes *is* a prohibition barbecue?' And if the stranger explained about unfermenticated drinks and soft stuff he would smite that heathen with the golden jug and say: 'Evil contaminations will spoil a whole barrel of good apples; we can't have a mammal of iniquity like that associatin' with this tribe! Leave him lay, poor heathen, and now all hands to the barbecue pits!'

"And the word would go forth from Dan to Burrsheba and from Alpha to Omega that Peetryarch Bill was fightin' dull care away from his lovin' people with a barbecue. And along about the third or fourth day the scouts and soothsayers would report there was a cloud of dust on the sky no bigger than a man's hand. And it would grow and grow and pretty soon Peetryarch Pete would come lopin' into sight acrost the hills and plains with all *his* posterity of in-laws and outlaws, and his cymbals and his drums and trumpets makin' a joyful noise. And from every direction, as the news spread, would come gallopin' a passel of prodigal sons, racin' home on ostriches and zebras from Babylon and Tyre, and ibexes out of the land of Egypt, with the smell of fatted calves and fried chicken and e-wee lambs tantalizin' their twitchin' nostrils.

"'Peace be with you,' the visitors would say, 'we smelled something cookin'.'

"'Alight, alight from off your jinglin' steeds,' Peetryarch Bill would say, 'and throw your lip over a wine-skin. Just stable your critters in the animal-tents, and spend the summer. Somebody in my outfit's havin' a birthday, or if they ain't they will afore this party breaks up. I was seven hundred years old myself last Ground Hog's Day, but there's a dance or two in the old boy yet. Light down, light down from your critters, and interduce your digestive ornaments to the flesh-pots. You are now enterin' the incorporated town of Peetryarchville, and the speed limit is what you make it.'

"Yes, sir, they was large and liberal in their minds, them old peetryarchs was. And there ain't been any real wisdom in the world since. It was their wisdom made 'em live that long. Consider the lilies, they says to each other, they never done a day's work in their lives and yet they're all spangled up like a circus parade. Havin' sense enough to whoop it up and oil their joints with joy is what kept 'em wise and cheerful. There wasn't a month passed by without a barbecue, with foot-races and sack-races and wrasslin' matches and climbing the greased pole. And dancin' and fiddlin' contests and baloon ascensions and striking machines. And leopards and hyenas racin' each other hitched to these two-wheeled circus chariots. And potato races and kissing games and turkey shoots with bows and arrows and pitching horseshoes. And wheelbarrow races and orators speaking pieces about this fair land of ours. And merry-go-rounds pulled by real animals on the gallop. And charades and riddle contests and parades and these here unicorns and Egyptian spinxes fighting each other in a bull ring. And steer-riding contests and soothsayers doing sleight o'hand. And snake-charmers and fellers summer-setting over elephants, and trained dogs and cane-racks. And every now and then you would hear another bung-starter go 'Whang!' and there would be another outburst of trumpets then and everybody would holler: 'Hooray! Gran'pap's openin' another barrel!' And it would keep up that way for days and days, betting their critters and their wives on the races, until one tribe was plumb busted and had to jine the other one. And it was always open house for everybody—for everybody except them heathen Muslins. Them Muslins is teetotallers because their prophet Mohammed had the indigestion in his stomach and couldn't drink, and didn't want anybody else to. Some of the puzzles and riddles and ketch-questions them old peetryarchs and their soothsayers used to ask can't be answered in this age of posterity at all, because there ain't the wisdom left in the world to answer 'em with. If there was more dancin' and barbecues and

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whooping it up, and not so much store set by industriousness, mebby joy and wisdom would come back to the world again. Any darned ijut can work his fool head off, but it takes a wise man to keep his thoughts and elements a-jigging joyful."

The Old Soak paused, and squinted beneath his lowered lids as if lost in the ecstatic vision which his fancy had composed for him, and I forebore to shatter the dream. Presently he continued:

"The only man I ever knowed personal that was like them early peetryarchs was old Jason Tucker that used to live back there in the middle of the swamp. If he was livin' now Jason would be purty nigh onto a hundred, but lightnin' struck him on his ninety-second birthday whilst he was climbin' a tree to rob a crow's nest. He wanted a young crow to train up for a pet for one of his babies.

"You know what the swamp back there used to be years ago afore it was most of it dreened away. Twenty-five or thirty miles long it was, and a dozen miles wide in places, with heavy-wooded knolls and islands and hummocks stickin' up. In the wet season of the year it would be practically a lake, except for the high lands, with no roads anywheres. And ponds and sloughs and marshes, and cricks connectin' 'em up, windin' everywhichways in the dryest times. Jason, he was born back there in the plumb middle of it, and he owned hundreds and hundreds of acres. If I said thousands and thousands I would be nearer right. His daddy had passed it onto him long years afore the Civil War. Even as late as when you was a kid that swamp land wasn't worth nothin' much. And when I was a boy it was worth even less. How Jason Tucker's dad ever come to get so much of it, or what he got it for, pretty near as far back as the Revolutionary War, nobody ever knowed; but his it was and it's certain it didn't cost him hardly anything.

"Along with the Tucker tribe was some other families that seemingly had always been there, and they mingled and multiplied and refurnished the earth. A lot of the younger ones was forever movin' out, so Jason's kingdom never got too crowded. And he was the law and the prophets in there, Jason was. He never let anybody put an axe into the woods on the high lands, except for firewood and to build their cabins, and up to the day of his death he never sold a single acre. I heard him myself turn down an offer of three hundred dollars an acre for five hundred acres of it just afore he died. 'What the blazes,' he says, 'I don't want money! What I want is a good time!' And he always kept open house for everybody that come along. He never dreened any of his own land; it was the dreenage all around him on every side, at the last, that made it worth all that money. For that's gotten to be the richest farmin' land in the world now.

"It was said when I was a kid that Jason Tucker's families was almost as mixed as Noah's in the Bible must 'a' been. Noah's son Shem was a Hebrew child, you remember, and his son Ham was a negro. And his son Japhet it don't say, but I always reckoned he was likely a United Brethren. But gosh! Jason's gang was joyous! How they all loved a good time! Jake Smith that runs this place, and me, and Judge Bill Wilson, that's in Congress now, used to go out into the swamp and visit with old Jason quite a good deal. We three was the closest friends he had in town, for the truth is the Tuckers didn't take so well with the villagers and farmin' people round about, for they didn't understand them and their joyousness. It was to Jake and Judge Bill Wilson and me that old Jase always come when he had something to talk over. Some of the meals and good times I have had out there! You couldn't get them vittles for love nor money anywheres now —duck and snipe and geese and turtles and pigeons and wild turkeys and rabbits and quails and squirrels! Say, that was the life!

"They raised some crops on the high land, to feed their cattle and horses, and fished and hunted and trapped, and when they wanted a barrel of liquor Jason would come to town with mink or muskrat skins or something; and every Sunday, from spring till winter they pulled a joyous barbecue for all hands and any visitors that might be passin' through.

"'What I got,' Jason used to say, 'belongs to my friends as long as I got it. And my friends is *everybody* that wants to have a good time!'

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"He never set much store by up-to-date inventions. 'Steam-engines and patent churns is a-goin' to be the ruination of this country yet,' he says to me once. 'And coal-mines and factories is bad for it too. If people would only stick to raisin' meat-critters and a little easy tillin' of the soil, and not go diggin' into the bowells of the earth or buildin' up into the air, there wouldn't be half the trouble in the world there is. They'd have time to dance and be joyful and go fishin' and huntin'. Them city folks that comes out my way to hunt ducks is always tired and troubled when they get there. Why, if they was gold mines only six inches in under my land, and I knowed it, I wouldn't let none of my families dig for them. Every time you dig down into the earth you get that much nearer to hell. Not but what a little gold's all right for women folks to prettify themselves up with, I do admit that.'

"Jason always had quite an eye for women, and there was some good-lookers in his woods; most of his tribe was fine, up-standin', good-lookin' people. Not what you'd call stylish dressers, by no means, but clean enough and full of fun. And Jason, he was a moral man, too, like an old peetryarch orter be.

"One Sunday, about fifteen years ago it was, me and Jake and Judge Bill Wilson went out to see him, and we noticed he was kind of thoughtful about something, and Jake asked him what it was.

"'Jake,' he says, 'my conscience ain't exactly right inside of me.'

"'What's settin' onto it, Jase?' Jake asks him.

"'I was just thinkin',' says Jason, 'there's always been a lot more families raised in amongst my woods here than there has been weddin's to match up with 'em, and it kind o' bothers me. Molly's been talkin' about it a good deal, too. Molly thinks as there ought to be at least one weddin' for every family raised.'

"Molly was the woman that would 'a' been Mrs. Jason Tucker at that time, if there had o' been a Mrs. Jason Tucker.

"'I always done what I dam' well please about raisin' families myself,' says Jase, 'and I know why I done it; and I got my answer all ready if any leadin' questions is to be asked about it on the Judgment Day. But at the same time I feel responsible for the morals of a lot of these here young folks. Molly says they all look up to me for guidance and I want to do my rightful duty by 'em.'

"'Well, then, Jase,' says Judge Wilson, 'you trot out the ones that have raised families without being married, and I'll marry 'em for you this afternoon.'

"'Judge, it ain't so simple and easy as all that,' says Jason. 'You see, there's a lot of complifications and mix-ups amongst my families that you couldn't straighten out by just an ordinary person-to-person marriage thataway.'

"'How do you mean, Jase?' says the Judge.

"'Well,' says Jason, pointing to a right likely-looking girl in her twenties, 'there's Sadie there, for instance. Sadie's my granddaughter, or my great-granddaughter, or somethin', and she's a good girl, Sadie is. When she was about sixteen there was a young book-agent wandered through here, and he liked our way of livin' so well he stayed permanent. One day after he'd been here a few weeks Sadie come to me and says: "Gran'pap, I want you to splice Jim and me." I done it the same way I always been doin' it, though I knowed well enough it wasn't Bible-bindin' legal. I jumped 'em over a broomstick. And the usual offspring comes along in the usual course of events. Two or three years later Sadie comes up and says: "Gran'pap, I want you to splice Tom and me." "I thought you was spliced to Jim," I says. "Me and Jim got kinda tired bein' married to each other," she says, "and Jim's figgerin' on hitchin' up with Arminty." Well, I knowed well enough how they might feel about that. I been fallin' into love all my life, over and over agin. I sympathize with young folks because I always kep' young myself, and I reckon I'll keep on gettin' married every oncet in a while as long as I live. So I jumped Sadie and Jim backwards over the broomstick, and divorced 'em, and she married Tom. And her and Tom has the usual offspring in the usual course of events. And then about a year ago Sadie goes and married Jerd. Which Jerd had already been married for a while to Arminty afore Arminty wedded Jim. And that's just the way it is with a lot of my

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families, Judge. It ain't so easy to figger out.

"'You can see for yourself a person-to-person weddin' wouldn't do much for Sadie. For instance, who would I tell Sadie to marry? Not Jim, because he's spliced again. Not Jerd, because he was married previous to Arminty. Not Tom, because first he was spliced to Elvira, and now he's spliced again. And they all get the usual offsprings in the usual course of events. What we need here, Judge, is a more *general* kind of a marriage than the common run, to make us all legal.'

"'Jason,' says the Judge, laughing at him, 'I tell you what we'll do. Line 'em all up, and I'll marry the whole swamp with one ceremony, and after that they can sort themselves into pairs.'

"So Jason blowed a horn and the whole tribe come runnin' up to the cleared space in front of his cabin, where we was settin' havin' a few drinks.

"'Children,' he says, 'there's gonna be a great big weddin' this afternoon.'

"'Hooray, Gran'pap!' they all yells. 'Whose?'

"'All of us,' says Jason. 'Make a ring.'

"'Hooray for Gran'pap!' they yelled again. 'And afterwards can we have a barbecue?'

"'You can,' says he.

"And they all took hands and made a big ring. Jason and Jake Smith and me and Judge Wilson was in the middle of it. And also twenty or thirty kids too young to get married. And while they all danced and jumped and capered and laughed and sung and went round and round like kids playin' ring around a rosy, Judge Wilson pronounced some kind of ceremony.

"'Now, then,' says Jason, 'you're all spliced, criss-cross and in-and-out, double-stitched and whipped over, each to each and all to all, tight as a leather bottle, and the partickler pardners you pick out now you gotto stick to. Kill a critter and get the pits ready, and roll out a barrel of liquor, and we'll have that barbecue.'

"'Hooray for gran'pap!' they all yells again, and run off to start the celebration.

"Well, sir, them feastivities lasted for several days and nights, with dancin' and jubilations, and barbecues and bonfires and fiddles singin', and joy as unconfined as it used to be in the days of the old peetryarchs themselves. I come darned near jinin' Jason's outfit forevermore that time, and I would have too, if it hadn't been for my old woman.

"Along about the middle of the second or third night of the party, I woke up sudden on the pile of brush where I had been nappin' outside Jason's cabin, with the feelin' that the whole world had turned topsy-turvy. There was a moon and stars in the sky above me, and the first thing I seen was a gust of smoke whirl acrost the face of the moon, and then I thought it must be sunrise, for the sky was so light. And then my ears began to take in a most remarkable mixtry of strange noises, and I set up and looked around me.

"I jumped to my feet. The swamp was burnin'! It was late in August and there hadn't been any rain for a couple of weeks, and the tops of the grass and rushes, above the water in the sloughs and ponds, had caught from some bonfire.

"It was the darndest sight I ever seen. Around and between the islands there were strips and pools and ribbons of fire winding in and out and swinging back and forth, and long moving streaks that looked like winding rivers of flame. A belt of flame would run up to an island and jump and circle it like you had throwed a burning lasso around a stump.

"And there was the noise of cattle bellowing and snorting as they come running up the slopes to the high ground and crashing through the bushes. And horses whinnying and screaming, and dogs barking everywhere and roosters crowing. And clouds of ducks rising in the distance and wheeling through the sky, and frogs croaking, and away off somewheres I heard a wolf howling. And you could even see fish jumping in the cricks and bayous. And pigs was squealing as they made for the hummocks; and a big blacksnake hustling up the hill crawled right acrost my feet.

"'Gosh,' I says, out loud, 'I hope that fire don't get into the underbrush.'

"'The big timber never burns much, even if it does,' said Jason. I hadn't known he was standing in the cabin door looking out. 'It's burned off afore this,'

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he says, 'that sleazy top-stuff over the ponds.'

"He was standin', enjoying the sight. Tongues and loops and eddies of fire licked out in every direction for as much as four or five miles on every side of us. And pretty soon the whole tribe was awake, and it seemed to put new life into 'em. They begun to fiddle and to dance and sing, on top of the high land, with the ocean of fire below 'em and the sky full of sick-lookin' stars above 'em. And when the smoke full of sparks would whirl acrost the sky it looked as if the sparks and stars was dancin' with the tribe, whirlin' and swingin' and spinnin'. And what with all the noises and the swayin' lines of rushes too green to burn, and the jumping shadows of the dancers, and the running fires that leapt and twisted and turned, it fair made a feller dizzy.

"Out from the cabin come runnin' Molly, and she was plumb hysterical.

"'Hell's reachin' for you, Jason Tucker!' she yelled. 'Hell's belchin' up through the mud to grab you!'

"'And for what reason should hell be after Jason?' says Judge Wilson, comin' out of the cabin with Jake.

"'For all the wickedness and drinkingness and carousings that's been goin' on in this here swamp the last sixty years,' says she.

"'You shut up, Molly,' says Jason, mildlike. 'Everybody's married now, ain't they? Well, then, what wickedness is there left in this here swamp?'

"'It's hell reachin' for you for the loose livin' you always done,' she says. 'One day won't wipe all that out.'

"'You go into your bed, and quit tryin' to spoil our party,' says Jason. She give him a mean look, but she went.

"'Molly,' says Jason, kind of apologizin'-like, 'used to be as full of fun as anybody, but last spring she went to a revival meetin' over to Springtown and got herself salvationed, and ever since then she's had notions about me bein' wicked. That's what comes of lettin' a woman go to town.'

"Well, mebby that fluffy top-stuff, grass and cat-tails and reeds, would have burned itself to the water's edge everywheres without ketching the underbrush on the raised ground, but just the same I felt better when it clouded up sudden, the way it does in August, and a rain ended the thing.

"I didn't know at the time how serious Judge Bill Wilson took that general weddin,' but Jason, he took it serious. He thought he was married to Molly, and it was the only time he ever thought he was married in his life, and it kind o' worried him.

"'Clem,' he said to me one day, 'I was worried when I thought I wasn't bein' moral, and I'm a dam' site more worried now I know I am. What's the answer? I keep right on fallin' in love just the same as ever, and I don't feel free, and a man orter always feel free.'

"'If I was you,' says I, 'I'd pull a barbecue and forget it.' Which he done, temporary.

"But it seems from what he told me Molly never could get over bein' salvationized. Some persons, when they get salvationized, get more joyous and happy, and easier to be friends with. But with other people it takes a different turn; it kind of seems to sour their elements, somehow.

"Jason, he used to tell me about it. He got to comin' to town oftener and droppin' in to gossip with Jake Smith and me.

"'That dam' Molly,' he says to me one time, 'is gettin' so I can't hardly stand her. If she wasn't married to me I'd chase her out'n the swamp for good. Why, she actually has got the notion now she wants me to wear a collar on Sundays!'

"And about a year later than that he come in and says she has got the notion now that she wanted him to dreen his swamp and sell the land and move into town. The dreenage round about had started by that time, and prices was going up, and Molly knowed there was oodles and oodles of money in it. But the idea of spoiling his kingdom and moving away from it was just plumb sacerlidge and blasphemiousness to Jason Tucker.

"'I never believed much in lambasting a woman,' says Jason, 'but when she sprung that onto me I went out and cut me a limb, and showed it to her, and hung it over the door. And I says to her that if she ever utters such words agin I'll wear it out onto her.'

"It was a couple of years after that agin

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that old Jason was settin' inside there with Jake and me, and we was all havin' one, when Jason spoke up and says:

"'Boys, you ever hear a turtle make a noise?'

"'No,' says I, 'and just for the sake of argument, you never did neither.'

"'A catfish has got a voice, but a turtle ain't,' says Jake.

"'Well,' says Jason, 'I'd say you was right, if I didn't know you was wrong. I been eatin' turtles, man and boy, for nearly ninety years, and I never heard one sing yet. But how do you figger about the Bible sayin' that the voice of the turtle is heard in the land?'

"'That's a miracle,' says I, 'like Balaam's ass turnin' its head around and beginning a conversation with him. Leastways, I always figgered it so.'

"'What difference does it make, anyhow?' says Jake. 'What you want to talk to turtles about?'

"'Oh, nothin', nothin'! Exceptin', if a feller was to get so het-up, and youngfeelin' and flustered-like that he heard the turtles singin', he could feel really *sure*. I often listen to the bull-frogs croakin' in the spring nights,' says Jason, kind o' dreamy-like, 'but I ain't heard the turtles yet, and I don't know if it's *true*.'

"'If *what's* true?' I said.

"'Bein' in love,' says Jason, still dreamy.

"'You in love again? Hell!' says Jake. 'At your time of life?'

"Me, I'm always tactful and diplomatic about what my opinions is, so as not to hurt anybody's feelin's, so all I said was:

"'Why, you dam' old fool, you ought to be ashamed of yourself.'

"'I ain't, Clem,' he says, grinnin' all over himself, 'I ain't a mite ashamed. I'm proud. I'm plumb tickled to death.'

"'If Molly finds it out she'll plumb tickle you to death,' says Jake, 'or jaw you to death, or somethin'.'

"'I ain't told her yet,' says Jason. 'But I'm a goanto. I'm goanto have her get a divorce, I am. I'm a goanto get married agin. I feel it comin' on.'

"'Well,' says I, 'Jason, who's the lucky woman?'

"'It's Ruby Sparks,' says Jason, lookin' as shy as a twenty-year-old kid.

"'Great Jehosaphats!' says Jake, risin' up in his chair and slumpin' down heavy again, 'right under my very nose, and I never guessed it!'

"For Ruby was workin' right in this very place then, and had been for nearly a year, helpin' Jake and his wife run the hotel.

"'Will she have you?' says I.

"'If I can get free, she will,' says Jason. 'Why not? Women always does and always has.'

"Jake and me both stared at him, and it come to me mebby a woman might be willin' to marry him yet. He was straight as an arrow, and with his long thick white hair, and his long white beard, and his broad chest and Roman nose, Jase didn't really look a year over sixty.

"'Turtles!' mutters Jake, lookin' at him meditative and thoughtful. 'Turtles been singin' to him! Hell!'

"And then he says: 'Jase, if Ruby Sparks makes up her mind to marry you, all Hades can't stop her, with Molly thrown in. Nothin' ever has stopped her yet, turtles or no turtles.'

"And just then who should walk through the room where we was sittin' but Ruby herself, on the way to the street.

"'You heard the turtles singin', too, Ruby?' says Jake. She stopped at that, and looked puzzled; and then she seen from the looks of the three of us that Jason must have told us, and she looked at us steady for a minute as if sizin' up what we were thinkin', and then she threw back her head and laughed at us. And it come to me when she laughed that Ruby and her laugh just exactly fitted into Jason's tribe in the swamp, and his notions of always bein' joyous; for it always was a laugh that made you want to laugh with it. She went over and run her hand through Jason's beard and hair like she was petting a big dog, and cocked her head on one side like she was admirin' him, and she says:

"'Say what you like, Jake, I'm going to take a chance!'

"With that she blew out. That was her word, always: 'I'm gonna take a chance!' I'd known her since she was born, and she was always takin' chances.

"Her dad wasn't ever any good, Lem Sparks wasn't. He run the printin' office

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here and got out the weekly paper, and Ruby set type for him in the office. Once, when Ruby was about seventeen, Lem needed a flat stone to make up his type on, and he sneaked down to the graveyard one night with a wagon and come back with a stone and put it onto a frame with the lettered side down. Lem must 'a' misjudged the location of the graves somewhat, or something, for it was his own first wife's stone he brought back, which *her* dad and not Lem had put up. And Ruby set type and made it up over that stone for months and never knew it was her own mother's. And then one day she felt letters on the other side, and felt along and found out. When her dad come in she picked up a bucket full of lye-water they used to clean type with, and poised it up to douse him in the face.

"'You sling that in my eyes,' says he, 'and I'll break your neck.'

"'I'll take a chance on that,' says Ruby, and let him have it; and she marched out and married Elbert Perkins that everybody had warned her against. She said she'd take a chance on Elbert. But when he failed in business on account of not being able to carry his liquor like a man he told her she'd have to go back and set type in her dad's printing office again. Ruby hit him with the stick she was stirrin' the wash with at the time, and run away with a travellin' piano tuner. And it wasn't so long after that she took still another chance. I seen her myself on a trip I made to New York City; she was happy and doin' well, she said, and was then married to one of these human fly fellers that climbs up buildings for a living, Elbert having died.

"'The thing I like about him is, he ain't afraid to take a chance, Uncle Clem,' she says to me; for she always used to call me Uncle Clem. And when he fell off a building and squashed himself she come back here and got a job in Jake's hotel. You couldn't help likin' Ruby, she was so cheerful and enterprisin'; and when she said she'd take a chance on old Jason's way of livin' I knowed she understood just the kind of fun he got out of it. There wasn't nothing but sixty years of age to separate 'em; and what's sixty years to a peetryarch that hears the turtles singin'?

"A week or so after old Jason first told us about the turtles Jake and me was sittin' in the corner of the dinin'-room kind o' late one night, having a little drink, and the door from the street swings open sudden and in comes Molly Tucker.

"'Come on, you two,' says Molly, 'I want you two for witnesses.'

"'To what?' says Jake.

"'You come on over to Judge Bill Wilson's office,' she says.

"And we follered her there.

"Ruby Sparks and Judge Wilson and Jason himself was already there, and we could see somethin' serious had been goin' on.

"'Now, then,' Molly says to Jake and me, 'I want you to tell this woman here whether I'm married to Jason Tucker or not. Her and this lyin' Judge Bill Wilson are tryin' to fix it that I ain't.'

"It seems Ruby had inquired about that general weddin' in the swamp, and gone and asked Judge Bill Wilson if it was legal. The Judge had said it wasn't, and they'd all got together for this showdown.

"'Well,' says I to Molly, 'I can witness that I seen Judge Bill Wilson marry the whole swamp, that Sunday afternoon; but as to whether it was legal or not, I don't know. I often wondered.'

"'Me, too,' says Jake Smith.

"'This wicked old Jason Tucker,' says Molly to me, 'come and asked me to divorce him a week ago, and I got out of him what was in his wicked, crazy old head about this painted Jezebel here. And *now* they're sayin' he don't need a divorce because we weren't ever married. I'll swear him into the asylum for craziness,' says she, 'afore I'll see all that land go to that huzzy there with the red onto her lips!'

"'Don't call me names, please,' says Ruby. She spoke sweet and quiet-like, but anybody that knowed her could see that underneath she was mad. 'And I don't want Jason's land. You can have all of it, for all of me. But I do want to see him livin' on it, as long as he lives.'

"'I'm going to dreen it!' says Molly Tucker. 'It's been waste and wicked long enough! I'm goin' to clear out that lousy, low-lived tribe of wicked, carousin' good-for-nothings, every last one of them, and

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dreen that land and sell it, and my husband and me are goin' to move to town and live like white folks orter.'

"Jason hadn't said nothing, so fur, but now he kind o' shuddered, and he says in a low voice:

"'Dreen my swamp, Molly? You know I couldn't live without it!'

"'It don't stand to reason you could live forever, anyhow,' says Molly, 'the kind of life you've led! And you're comin' to town and pass your last days respectable and sober and try and make up a little for all the harm you done in the world. Either that, or I'll swear you into the asylum for craziness. A man of your age, tryin' to put his lawful wife aside and wed a painted Jezebel! I could get plenty of evidence you been crazy for years!'

"Jake and me looked at each other, and we both knowed mebby she could get away with that; and so did Judge Bill Wilson. For Jason wasn't understood generally, like a few of us understood him; and always there had been some around town that called him 'Crazy Jase.'

"Ruby, she leaned over and patted Jason on the shoulder, like he was a pet bear or something, and she says:

"'Don't you worry, Old-Timer! You're not goin' to die so soon as all that. You got a lot of barbecues and dances comin' to you yet. And when you do kick in, it's goin' to be right there in your own woods, with me stickin' around, mebby.'

"'And the turtles singin',' says Jake Smith; but nobody but me and Jase knowed what he meant.

"'I always kind o' liked you, ole Rough Neck,' says Ruby, laughin' at Jason.

"And you could see she really did. The whole idear of him and his woods and his tribe tickled Ruby. She was like that. I ain't sayin' she was altogether honest when she said she didn't want any of his land at all. But she did want to see him livin' on that land, wild and free, as long as there was life in him. And there was a lot of life in him yet, too.

"'Molly,' says Judge Bill Wilson, right serious, 'you keep saying what you're going to do, and what you're not going to do, with that land and with Jason, and the plain facts are that you can't do anything but what Jason wants to do. You're not the boss of that property. Jason is.'

"'I am,' says Molly. 'I'm his wife, and he's got to do what I tell him, or I'll lock him up for craziness!'

"'Molly,' says Jason, 'I offered to be fair with you. I'll give you a third of that land. You can have it willed to you now, so you'll get it when I die.'

"'Yes, and have that woman there make you change your will, as soon as I've signed the quittance papers!' says Molly. 'I got a third comin' to me, as your lawful wife, and I'll have it deeded to me now, along with another third, afore I give you up to marry her.'

"'If I deed it to you now, you'd cut it up and dreen it,' says Jason, 'and spoil my country.'

"'That's what I'll do,' says Molly.

"Nobody said anything for a minute, and then Jason says, slow and thoughtful:

"'More'n likely you'd 'a' had every acre of it, Molly, to do what you liked with when I'm gone, if you hadn't acted so mean the last four or five years. You used to be as full of fun as anybody. But you nearly pestered me to death lately. Every time I throwed my lip over a dipper of whiskey you told me I was bound to Hades. Every time we had a dance or a barbecue, you've flopped onto your knees and tried to pray the fun away. You pestered me to wear collars, and you pestered me to wear vests, and you pestered me to cut my hair, and you acted like hell had broke loose every time I cussed a little, and you jawed me and worried me and shot off your mouth about wickedness and sinfulness till you made my life a burden to me. And every time we bet on a wrasslin' match or a foot-race or a turkey-shoot you got up and told us all we was goin' to be damned forever for the sin of gamblin'. It's been gettin' so I was nigh afraid to sneeze out there for fear I'd get told there was Satan's brimstone in my nose. I tell you free and fair, Molly, that there's been fifty times I would 'a' chased you from my cabin, if I hadn't been married to you.'

"'You aren't married to her,' says Judge Bill Wilson.

"'Why ain't he, then?' says Molly, her eyes blazin'. 'He told you to marry us legal, and we both thought you had. If

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we ain't married, it's your fault, Judge Bill Wilson. Was you bribed not to do it right, or something? That's a pretty story, comin' from you, Bill Wilson, that we ain't married! We are, too.'

"'Yes,' says Jason, lookin' at Judge Bill Wilson, 'how come, Judge? Molly's right about that. We both thought we was wedded legal.'

"Judge Bill Wilson hawked and cleared his throat and acted right uncomfortable for a minute, and then he says:

"'I know it's my fault. I was plumb foolish—we'd all had a couple of drinks that afternoon, and it seemed to me like it would be a good joke to marry the whole swamp together. I thought everybody took it more or less as a joke.' And he looked at me and Jake.

"'I never knowed how to take it,' I says.

"'I didn't hear any turtles singin' that afternoon,' says Jake, 'but the night of the fire everything else was.'

"'Joke!' says Molly. 'It was a weddin'!'

"'No,' says Judge Bill Wilson, 'you can't marry a whole community together that way, and make it stick. I've looked it up since then . . . here lately. You two are not married. You haven't even got a case against Jase as his common-law wife, Molly. He lived with five other women, and called each one his wife, before he took up with you. And a half dozen of the children, and two of the women, are living yet. That's where you stand, Molly, and you'd have no case in a court.'

"'See here, all of you,' said Jason. 'I'm gonna do the right thing by Molly. Meby it wasn't legal, but I intended it should be, and I'm a gonna stick by my moral intentions, just the same. I'm a gonna will her one-third of my property, which she'll get after I've demised into my grave.'

"'I'll have it deeded to me *now*, not one-third, but *two*-thirds,' says Molly, 'and he shan't marry that woman there until I get it!'

"And then she turned toward Judge Wilson and fairly screamed:

"'What kind of a judge are you, Bill Wilson, goin' around the country makin' mock marriages! Fifty mock marriages of innocent people all in one afternoon! If you don't let my weddin' stand, I'll ruin you, Bill Wilson! Makin' weddin's, and sayin' they were legal, and lettin' people live together and raise families for years, and then tellin' 'em it was a joke, because you'd been drinkin' whiskey! I'll go into court with you any day on that, Bill Wilson! You suppose the people in this county would have you on the bench again? You can't run for office of dog-ketcher in this county after I've got through with you, Bill Wilson! You're runnin' for the State Senate right now, on the Republican ticket, and I'll lick you with that story if you make a single move against my marriage! Women's got the ballot now! And there won't be a town or a crossroads or a farmhouse in this county where I don't tell that story of you makin' mock marriages when you're drunk, Bill Wilson, and you a judge on the bench, trusted by innocent people. Just *say* I ain't married! *Say* it! Say it private, or say it public, or say it in court, and I'll tell 'em why I ain't! I'll tell every man and woman in three counties why I ain't! I'll tell 'em! I got you licked, Bill Wilson!'

"Nobody said anything for quite a spell. Judge Bill Wilson was a good pal of Jake's and mine, and old Jase's, and we didn't like to see him licked. But it looked as if Molly had him. And he must 'a' thought so, too. For pretty soon he said:

"'You've got me, Molly. As far as I'm concerned, personally, I'm out of it. You're right. I couldn't afford to be dragged into a court, on any kind of action, and testify that I'd made a mock marriage, with three drinks of whiskey in me, and let people think it was legal—all on account of a sense of humor. A court wouldn't understand it. And the voters wouldn't understand it. You've got me licked. What's next?'

"'The next thing,' says Molly, 'is that I'm going to have two-thirds of that land deeded to me. And after that, he can have his divorce and marry that huzzy there, if he wants to. A third of it's enough for them—too much!'

"'Thanks,' says Ruby, smiling.

"'I'll have them deeds,' yells Molly, excited again, and her eyes glitterin', and

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her whole body shakin', 'and I'll oust that low-life gang, and dreen that land! It's mine, now! I'll cut it up, and have decent farms in there, and law-abidin' people, and a meetin'-house, and a preacher, to pray out of it all the hell and corruption of the last hundred years! I've waited for it and prayed for it and fought for it for years, and now I've *got* it! I'll have them deeds, or I'll ruin *you*, Bill Wilson, and send *you* to the crazy-farm, Jase Tucker!'

"And with that she went out. Nobody spoke for a while, and then Ruby says:

"'Which of you sweet old kids has got a cigarette?'

"Judge Bill Wilson give her one, and she lit it, and took a couple of deep inhales, and then she laughed and blowed smoke through old Jason's whiskers, and says:

"'Now, then, Davy Crockett, don't look so serious!'

"'It is serious,' says Jason. 'She means it. I've a notion to foller after her, and twist her neck!'

"'Nothing of the sort, Robinson Crusoe,' says Ruby, 'they *would* put you in the crazy-house then, for sure. And don't sign any papers, either. When she raves about those deeds, make promises, and put her off, and make more promises. Don't any of you sign anything, or say anything, or do anything—or buy, sell, plant, sow, make bargains, marry, or go on journeys—until you hear from me, and I tell you the moon's right for it. I'm going to bed.' And with that she went out.

"'All on account of turtles singin' in the moonlight,' says Jake Smith, as him and me left Judge Bill Wilson's office.

"It was six weeks after that was the election. I hadn't heard nothin' more of Jason and his affairs; neither Jake Smith nor me asked Ruby anything. And as for Jason, he kept away from town. I guess Judge Bill Wilson heaved a sigh of relief when Election Day come and Molly hadn't told her story. He wasn't so easy about the election, anyhow. The other two counties in the district went Republican oftener than they did Democrat, but here in our home county it was the teeteringest thing you ever seen—one time Democrat and the next time Republican.

"Election Day was fine, and the voting was early. The polls didn't close until six o'clock, but by four in the afternoon it looked as if almost everybody in the district had cast their ballots that was going to. Judge Bill Wilson and some of his friends, including Jake and me, was in the hotel parlor up there, and we had been getting reports all afternoon, by telephone and telegraph, and it was a darned close thing, at five in the afternoon, accordin' to the estimates from all over. A hundred or so votes one way or the other might swing it. It's the evenest district in the State, anyhow, and always was.

"At five o'clock, while we was sitting up there, in comes Ruby. And old Jason was follering her. 'Judge, we want to talk to you a minute,' she says.

"All the rest of us got up to go out.

"'Jake, you and Uncle Clem stay here,' she says. 'I may need you.'

"And when the rest of 'em was gone she pulled a marriage license from her bag and said:

"'Judge, Jason and me have come to get you to marry us.'

"'Won't somebody else do as well as me, Ruby?' says Judge Wilson.

"'No,' says Ruby, 'somebody else won't. Some day or other Molly *might* come into court, with some kind of a case, and tell about that joke weddin'. And it seems as if it's a case that could be made to stand or fall by the way *you* testified about it. But if you marry Jason and me here and now, I'll be pretty sure what your testimony would be.'

"'She's got no case,' says the Judge. 'I told her so. There's only one way I could testify, and be honest, and that's against her.'

"'Then marry us now,' says Ruby. 'Let's get it settled right now.'

"'But if I marry you, then she *will* come into court,' says Judge Bill, 'and I'll have to confess publicly about performing that idiotic ceremony.'

"'Some time or other that story's coming out on you, Judge,' says Ruby. 'The only question for you is, would you rather be *in* the State Senate when it comes out? Or would you rather be a man that had just been *licked* for the State Senate? Come to the window.'

"We follered her to the window and looked out. In the square right in front

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there was the whole darned Tucker tribe —all but Molly. Ruby'd brought 'em in. The square was packed with 'em, men, women and children and dogs; the kids squalling in their mothers' arms and hanging onto their mothers' skirts. They'd never all been to town at one time before, and some of 'em hadn't never been to town in their lives. Out in the swamp they looked reasonable, but here in town, when they was all together, I must admit they was pretty wild and shaggy. But they were having a good time, laughing and singing and talking, and some of them were jigging and playing onto mouth-organs and Jews-harps. The whole of the townspeople was gathered around the square, too, looking at them. When they seen Ruby and Jason at the window half a dozen of them yells to him: 'Which way, Gran'pap, which way? What are we, Democrats or Republicans?'

"'It ain't quite settled yet, which you be,' yells Jason. 'You just hold your horses a minute.'

"'There's two hundred and eleven votes out there,' says Ruby, 'waiting to find out whether they're Democrats or Republicans.'

"'Let me see that license, Ruby,' says Bill Wilson.

"And Jake and me was the witnesses.

"After the ceremony Jason steps to the window and yells out: 'You're Republicans!'

"'Hooray! Hooray!' yells the Tucker tribe, laughin' and dancin' and jiggin' up and down and turnin' summersets and cartwheels, and the dogs jumpin' and barkin' in the street, as they moved towards the polling-place. 'Hooray for Gran'pap! Hooray for the Republican party! Get out of our way, here comes the Republicans! Hooray! Get out of the way! The Republicans is comin'!'

"'Well,' says Judge Bill Wilson, looking out the window after them, 'it may be they'll fix *this* election for me. But Molly will kill me on the *next* one!'

"'Don't worry about the next one,' says Ruby. 'You had to take a chance, and you took it.' And then she says: 'If it ever was to happen that I was the richest woman in this county, I'd maybe help you run for Congress some time, Judge.'

"'Come on now, old Teddy Bear,' she says to Jason, 'and be cheerful! Your swamp isn't going to be touched as long as you live. We'll get the tribe back home and pull a barbecue. You're all invited,' she says to us.

"It was two years after that old Jason was struck by lightnin' robbin' that crow's nest, for Ruby's kid and his. And when he died he left every acre to Ruby. She give every darned Tucker family forty acres, including Molly, and she sold the rest of it for enough to make herself a rich woman. As long as he lived she never let a ditch into that old peetryarch's swamp, nor an axe into his woods. She used to say to me: 'I'm kind o' crazy about old Santy Claus, Uncle Clem! He's like some old gazookus out of a story, Jason is.'"

"Where is she now?" I asked.

"In Paris," said Mr. Hawley. "And from what I've hearn from time to time she still hearkens to the turtles singin', and she's still a-takin' chances."

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# The Cassandra of New England

BY VAN WYCK BROOKS

MISS MARY MOODY EMERSON lived in her shroud. She had stitched it all herself, and when death refused to come she had put it on as a night-gown, then as a day-gown. She was even seen on horseback once, in Concord, cantering through the village street, attired for the grave, with a scarlet shawl thrown about her shoulders.

Miss Emerson was the daughter of the former minister of Concord who had died in the Revolution. She was a dwarf, four feet three inches tall, with a bold pinkish face, a blue flash in her eyes, and yellow hair cropped close under a mob-cap. She was short and erect as an adder about to strike. As an infant she had beheld from a window of the Old Manse the manœuvres of the minutemen in the meadow by the bridge; but she had been left an orphan early, and for half a century, in 1840, she had drifted about the back-country of Maine and Massachusetts, drifted from one rustic boarding-house to another, shaking her finger, for she was an autocrat and a prophetess, and as fiery as the pit. She was poor, obscure, uncomely, but an Emerson still, of the seed of the ruling caste, the child of six generations of a sovereign priesthood. Her fellow boarders observed that her thimble was bright and unworn. She used it not for sewing but as a seal. Night and day she wrote, wrote, wrote. Letters, an interminable diary, prayers, ejaculations, mystical dreams, asseverations, exalted and melancholy, of her submission to the Eternal. She could not sit, she could not sleep; a demon drove her pen. For she had survived, a witness of the lofty and terrible religion of John Calvin, to rebuke what she regarded as the poor, pale, unpoetical humanitarianism of the new day. Her voice was the voice of a sibyl, issuing from the caves of the past.

She was queerer than Dick's hatband. She was thought to have the power of uttering more disagreeable things in twenty minutes than any other person living. She kept pace with nobody; she had received, she said, the fatal gift of penetration, and her mission was to undermine the vanity of the shallow. Was some high matter broached in conversation? Did some rash suppliant invite Miss Emerson's opinion? "Mrs. Brown," the sibyl replied, "how's your cat?" Was some lady praised too warmly in her presence? She pricked the panegyric: "Is it a colored woman of whom you were speaking?" ("Give us peace in our boarders," she wrote on one occasion, and, when shown the misspelling, said it would do as it was.) She tore into a chaise or out of it, her nephew Ralph Waldo Emerson observed, into the house or out of it, into the conversation, the character of a stranger, disdaining all the gradations by which others timed their steps; and if she found that anything was dear and sacred to you, she instantly flung broken crockery at it. But her oddities were never designed; they sprang from her isolation, from a certain twist in her destiny. Of Talleyrand she said: "I fear he is not organized for a future state," and of another fallen angel: "What a poet would Byron have been if he had been bred a Calvinist!" But the Byrons and the Talleyrands were the darlings of her imagination. She loved life, she loved manners, beauty, distinction, genius. She was born to command, to dictate, to inspire. "For the love of superior virtue," she said, "is mine own gift from God." And who could have numbered the waste places of her journey, "the secret martyrdom of youth, heavier than the stake, the narrow limits which know no outlet, the bitter dregs of the cup?" Loving the world, the world that had passed her by, she had fallen in love with death; no "easeful death," but the flaming death of the saints. She had her bed made in the form of a coffin. She invoked the worms as the Beatrice who would lead her to paradise.

But death was not to be wheedled. "O



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dear worms!" she wrote. "Most valuable companions!" They were deaf to Miss Emerson's entreaties; she was doomed to live. "Tedious indisposition," she noted in her diary. "Hoped, as it took a new form, it would open the cool sweet grave." And again: "If one could choose, and without crime be gibbeted—were it not altogether better than the long drooping away by age without mentality or devotion?" But mentality and devotion she had; and, since she was obliged to give up the prospect of dying, she continued to live with a vengeance. She carried her shroud, like Saladin, into the battle. A bread-and-water diet; an inheritance of one hundred dollars, with a small share in a farm. She had to "finger the very farthing candle-ends"—the duty assigned to her pride. But poverty was the least of her cares; she had never felt pinched as a girl, with ten dollars a year "for clothes and charity." For the rest, "I could never have adorned the garden," Miss Emerson said. "I never expected connections and matrimony. My taste was formed in romance, and I knew I was not destined to please." So she baked and swept and carded, in her lonely retreats, and toiled away at Plato and Cicero's Letters. Not for her were "the pales of the initiated by birth, wealth, talents, and patronage. As a traveller enters some fine palace," she said, "and finds all the doors closed, and he only allowed the use of some avenues and passages, so have I wandered from the cradle over the apartments of social affections, or the cabinets of natural and moral philosophy, the recesses of ancient and modern lore." She knew Plotinus and Coleridge as well as she knew her Milton and Wordsworth and Madame de Staël. And she never lost faith that, some day, she would, in spite of all failures, know true friendship. For hers was "that greatest of gifts, the capacity to love the All-perfect." (Regardless of personal happiness. "Happiness? 'Tis itself.")

What rapturous hours she experienced in these long-drawn years of seclusion! "For culture," she wrote, "can solitude be spared? Solitude, the safeguard of mediocrity, is to genius the stern friend, the cold obscure shelter where moult the eagle wings which will bear one farther than suns and stars." In her Thebaid in Maine —a farm called "The Vale," where she boarded with her sister—she consorted with angels and archangels; she swam in her native element, "the fiery depths of Calvinism, with its high and mysterious elections to eternal bliss, and all its attendant wonders." To be "alive with God" was enough, to be able to "wake up the soul amid the dreary scenes of monotonous Sabbaths, when Nature looked like a pulpit." And in her passionate prayers, in her visions of the dying bed that would some day reflect lustre on her darkest fate, she apostrophized Eternity. No deceitful promises there, no fantastic illusions! No riddles concealed by the shrouds of loitering Time! None of Time's Arachnean webs, which decoy and destroy! No memory of defeats in virtue! "We exist in Eternity," she wrote. "Dissolve the body and the night is gone, the stars are extinguished, and we measure duration by the number of our thoughts, by the activity of reason, the discovery of truths, the acquirement of virtue, the approach to God. . . . The Gray-headed god (of Time) throws his shadows all around, and his slaves catch, now at this, now at that; one at the halo he throws around poetry, or pebbles, bugs or bubbles. Sometimes they climb, sometimes creep into the meanest holes—but they are all alike in vanishing, like the shadow of a cloud."

Hours of rapture, indeed! "How many stars," she exclaimed, "have set and risen, suns perhaps expired, and angels lost their glory, since I have droned in this place!" Had she missed so much, "cowering in the nest of quiet?" "Life truly resembles a river, ever the same, never the same. And perhaps a greater variety of internal emotions would be felt by remaining with books in one place, than pursuing the waves which are ever the same. Is the melancholy bird of night, covered with the dark foliage of the willow and cypress, less gratified than the gay lark amid flowers and suns? . . . 'Tis not in the nature of existence, while there is a God, to be without the pale of excitement." But sometimes she had her doubts. She remembered her visits to Boston, in the early years of the century, her brilliant brother William—Waldo's father—her nephews in their childhood. (Heirs of the shining world that she ad-

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mired from afar.) And then a longing-like despair was to her farthest cavern sent. And her old desire for the worm was not so greedy as to find herself once more in these pleasurable haunts.

The curtain rose before her. It was 1810: a Sunday evening in William's cheerful parlor. A tray stood on the sideboard, with decanters of wine and spirits, tumblers and glasses. There was William himself, the minister of the First Church of Boston, tall and fair, with his large, expressive eyes, so graceful and bland in manner. The Anthology Club was assembling; one by one the members were dropping in. There was William Ellery Channing, already famous at thirty, the little man with the flying pulse, whose sermons were like a mountain speaking. Judge Story was there; and the shaggy Daniel Webster, the lawyer from New Hampshire; and the smiling Buckminster, elegant in face and figure, with a voice such as Boston had never heard before—Buckminster, of whom people were saying that he "celebrated the marriage of Unitarianism with literature." For these new Unitarian doctrines, cold and weak and thin, Miss Emerson felt nothing but scorn; but literature, ah, that was another matter! And literature was the burning topic at her brother's house. They were publishing a magazine, *The Monthly Anthology*, to "apply caustic and lancet to the disorders of the American press"; and they met to discuss the manuscripts over their supper. On "the merits of Gray as a poet." On "Mr. Goethe's new novel." On "Dante Alighieri, an Italian bard." (What strange names were beginning to be heard in Boston!) They were ministers, for the most part, but the magazine was not to be destitute of the manners of a gentleman, nor a stranger to genteel amusements. It was going to take note of theatres, museums, balls, and whatever polite diversions the town might afford.

Miss Emerson thought of her forebears, the godly lives and deaths of her sainted kindred. Her brother was a new shoot on this old stem! How would Peter Bulkeley have regarded him—the founder of the line, the founder of the town of Concord, whose only care had been to "excel in holiness"? And Father Moody, of York, and Joseph Emerson, of Malden, and her father, William, of Concord, the Revolutionary chaplain? "Painful preachers" to a man, enthusiasts like herself, "wrestling scholars," they would never have known their blood in this genial worldling. To one, as he lay on his death-bed, the Angel of Death had appeared, tapping on the window, and he had bidden the frightened family open the door. Another, when some of his parishioners had risen to leave the church in the midst of the service, cried out: "Come back, you graceless sinners, come back!" And when they ventured into the tavern of a Saturday night, he had followed them, dragged them forth and driven them home. A third, when his house was burning, stood by and sang: "There is a house not made with hands." How sombre they were, how severe in their antique Hebraism! They were associated in Miss Emerson's mind with the Fates and the Eumenides, with Nemesis, with all that was grandest in the Greek mythology.

Times had certainly changed!—with these Boston ministers, sitting over their wine, discussing books from England. And yet Miss Emerson listened like a child. Not when they spoke of theology! (This counting and weighing of texts was beneath contempt. How cold it was, how formal! To think that the faith of Calvin had led to these pale negations!) But they talked about Byron and Wordsworth and "Paradise Lost," and how destitute America was of science and curious research. They were starting an Athenæum, and Buckminster had just come home from London and Paris with a whole shipful of treasures (Chalmers's "British Essayists," a set of the British poets, topographical works on ancient Greece and Rome, *The Botanical Magazine*, *The Naval Chronicle*, books in Italian and Spanish, dictionaries of all the modern tongues). William, whose orations warmed the hearts of the Federalists, had edited a collection of hymns, taking pains to exclude those in which the voice of poetry was silent. And Judge Story had published a poem of his own. A Handel and Haydn Society was in the air, and a gallery of painting and sculpture. A new spirit was coming over Boston. One might almost have thought the Periclean Age was about to be born again.

Miss Emerson had her doubts about all these innovations, this babel of arts and

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inventions. What sort of civilization was it going to produce? One thing only she knew: the world of her fiery forebears had vanished forever, and this new world lacked the grandeur that belonged to a Doric and unphilosophical age. But it thrilled her none the less. What vistas opened before her! A world of Madame de Staëls, a world such as the Greeks and Romans had known. And then she thought of her nephews, asleep in the nursery. With a race like theirs, and with all these opportunities, what a future lay before them! The majority, she said to herself, would ever be in swaddlings, but never the children of her own tragic line. They were to be Byrons and Talleyrands, too. No mere apes of men, no crawling sycophants, but spiritual monarchs after the ancestral pattern.

In later years Ralph Waldo Emerson looked back on his Aunt Mary as the strongest influence in his early education. She had fallen in love with her nephews—with himself, eight years old at the time of his father's death, and his brothers, Charles and Edward. William, the eldest, was perhaps too sober to interest her very much. (Though even of him Miss Emerson had hoped the best; and when, years later, he had sailed away to Germany to study theology, she had begged him to repay her long affection with "one single learned letter. . . . When you come to the antient MSS.," she wrote, "the Hebrew, Syriac, and rabbinical language, *then remember me!*" But Charles the radiant, Edward the fervent, and Waldo, shy, slow, passive, but so winning and so responsive, were her special pride. They were never to travel, she had told them, with the souls of other men. They were born to bring fire and light to the race of mortals.

The true "aunt of genius," Emerson called her later. Her language was always happy—"as if caught from some dream," and with all her penetration she combined a wit that was "subtle, frolicsome, musical, unpredictable." She reminded him of "the wild horse of the desert, snuffing the sirocco and scouring the palm-grove." Her early talk he remembered as triumphant and infectious, like the "march of the mountain-winds, the waving of flowers, or the flight of birds." She, more than any one else, with her fund of learning, had taught him to write; she had put him on his mettle, she had supervised his studies, exhorted, rebuked, incited him. With what fervor she had reproved him in his college days because Cæsar and Cicero stirred him more than the memory of his own Revolutionary grandfather! His ancestors were the constant theme of her discourse. Not praise, not men's acceptance of their doing, had absorbed their thought, but the Spirit's errand through them. They were, these Emersons of old, or so they had seemed to the boy as he listened, awe-struck, like the noble rock-maple tree which all around their villages bled for the service of man.

He had listened then, an obscure little boy, chubby, awkward, affectionate as a puppy, with a sluggish mind, a mind heavy and overcast, like a summer sky that is charged with electricity. He listened still, a man of middle age, whenever his Aunt Mary came to Concord, for she still seemed to him, as she seemed to Henry Thoreau, the "wittiest and most vivacious woman" living. Her visits were a divided joy, for she trampled on the common humanities all day long. "You must remember, dear," she said to Mrs. Emerson, "that you are among us but not of us." And when Mrs. Thoreau came to call upon her, wearing her cap with long yellow ribbons and still longer bonnet-ribbons, she took this lady to task. "You may have noticed, Mrs. Thoreau," she said, "that while we were speaking of your admirable son I kept my eyes shut."—"Yes, madam, I have noticed it."—"It was because I did not wish to look upon those ribbons of yours, so unsuitable at your time of life and to a person of your serious character." But who was more amusing at the tea-table? Oh, no, she never took tea. But she asked for a little cocoa. The cocoa came, and she took it because it was soothing, and put a little tea in it to make her lively; and if there was a little coffee, that was good for getting rid of the taste. Miss Emerson believed in medicine; she never threw any away, and if she found some drops of laudanum here and a pill or two there, a little quinine and a little antimony, she mixed them up and swallowed them all together.

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To reprove was her vocation. Once Henry James the elder was spending the night in Concord—an enchanting guest, this Saul among the prophets who had come to Boston to live. Alcott and Henry Thoreau had dropped in for the evening; Alcott had the floor, indeed, for one of his "Conversations." He was launching out, the cloud-compeller, and all Concord kept silence before him; he was spreading his wings for a flight over the void when the irrepressible James called for a definition. Alcott was sadly upset. To *de*fine, as he had often said, was to *con*fine. And great airships are not like tugs and catboats; they must have plenty of room to get under way. Another thrust from James, and the airship was on the rocks. Pythagoras said no more, and Saul had the ear of the company. What a laughing rigmarole! What gusts of earnest love of humankind! Society was to blame, said James, for all the crime that was committed. Let the criminal shout from the gallows that he had never been treated kindly by a single mortal! And then he pitched into the "moral law," by which he meant self-conscious moral judgment. Miss Emerson rose in her shroud. She did not stir from her place, but she stood upright; and, raising her hands, she clasped them above her head and anathematized this pagan.

But "the finest wits have their sediment," Miss Emerson also said; and there was still hope for a sinner. "Hope lives, and travels on with the speed of suns and stars." And she was, as Henry Thoreau remarked, "really and perseveringly interested to know what thinkers think." She had entertained, indeed, all the thoughts of Concord, as Plutarch had entertained the thoughts of the ancients. She distrusted Alcott's theories. Their superstructure, she said, was "gilded and golden," but the foundations were "in the depths of"—she couldn't yet say what. But Thoreau's "extensive mentality" had broken down her defenses, and he always enjoyed crossing swords with her. One evening, when the sibyl had just arrived, he hastened in to read his manuscript to her. In some passage the word "god" was used in a merely heathenish sense, and Miss Emerson inquired, with dignified anxiety: "Is that god spelt with a little 'g'?" Fortunately for Henry, it was. No easy flute, Aunt Mary, but a clanlike instrument, as Waldo Emerson observed, a bagpipe from which only a native Highlander could draw the right music. But what a nose for character she had, what a taste for strength and distinction! She remembered the names of the founders of the oldest families in Boston as shopkeepers, tailors, distillers, as well as doctors, lawyers, and ministers, and who better than she knew the difference between a great man and a great maker of money? She had made up her mind years before that her nephews were not to be mere good husbands and neighbors; they must be known of men as Rabbis and Fathers. They had somehow, one and all, slipped out of the pulpit; but she could not deny that Waldo, in spite of all his notions, had a mind of his own.

And she had largely made it—she, the "puny pilgrim," as she called herself, "whose sole talent was sympathy." Emerson often reflected on the character of the old Calvinists, of whom for him his aunt was the chief exemplar. All the men and women of the later time lacked their depth of source. They had spoken, she had spoken of "simpler and grander means" than those that were known to the moderns, who were "anxious for society, books, ideas, and became sensitive to all that affects the organs of thought." "A few pulsations of created beings," she said, "a few successions of acts, a few lamps held out in the firmament enable us to talk of Time, make epochs, write histories—to do more, to date the revelations of God to man." She died at eighty-eight, in far-off Williamsburg, with a face unwrinkled still, pink as of old, with the blue flash in her eye and the yellow hair cut close under the mob-cap. She had loved death all her days, and often her friends had wished her "joy of the worm"; and when they laid her away in Sleepy Hollow the event had such a comic tinge in their eyes that they feared to look at each other across the grave. Had she ever been a Christian? Emerson asked himself, and checked himself in asking it. Cassandra had uttered, to a frivolous, sceptical age, the arcana of the gods. And in Mary Emerson New England had had its Cassandra.



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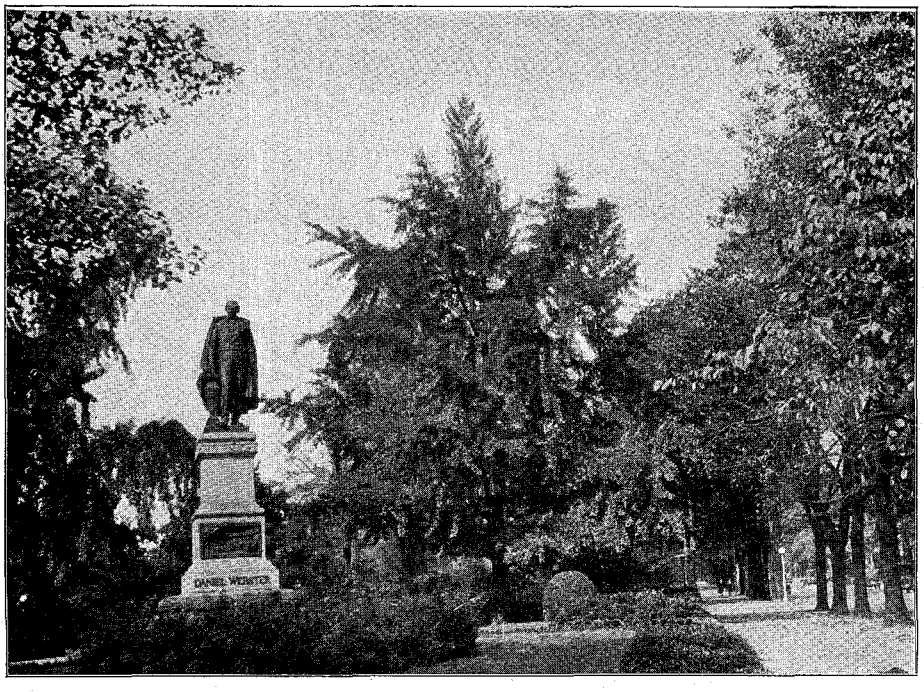

A living Gingko-tree at Scott Circle, Washington, D. C.
Daniel Webster Monument to the left.

# The Story of a Leaf

BY JOHN C. MERRIAM
President of the Carnegie Institution of Washington

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS

IT happens often that the greater things of nature, as in human life, are only imperfectly appreciated until in the light of a single circumstance suddenly they rise to overshadowing importance. So we read that when Elijah stood upon the mount before the Lord, it was not in the strong wind, nor yet in the earthquake or the fire, but through the "still small voice" that the Almighty was recognized.

On a recent journey to Columbia River Gorge I had the pleasure of revisiting a region familiar from many years of interest in the meaning of its history. As on other occasions, the bordering cliffs, with summits disappearing in mist and the river moving majestically below, made me see the canyon in all its strength and beauty. In the geologists' language, I read again the record of ancient floods of lava piled up to build a mountain in which later the river cut this gorge. But it remained for a fragment of a leaf, fluttering from its burial place in the foundations of the valley wall, to give through compelling vividness of its own reality the clearest expression of the story of creation which opened before me. The finding of this leaf continues always fresh in memory as one of those occasions when the past seems to open, and for the moment we look through to see the Builder at work.

It was on a stormy day in July that I passed through Columbia Gorge with a party of geologists engaged in study of the history of that fascinating region.



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Riding down over swinging curves of the highway we examined the rock formations which make the canyon-rim. The summit was built from edges of old lava flows. Below the lavas were thick layers of water-washed gravel, and boulders. Deeper in the gorge the gravels lay upon still greater lava flows, piled hundreds upon hundreds of feet to make the wall. Across the river these lava beds were seen extending widely under mountains and plains beyond.

As the panorama lengthened our wonder deepened. Rising two thousand feet around and above us were stony cliffs of what was once melted rock. Below, like a great ribbon-saw, the river was cutting its way with teeth of sand and gravel dragged upon its floor. We recognized the canyon as merely one stage in a process of shaping and moulding of the vast pile into which it had been cut.

Approaching the historic station of Bonneville, our party found the lower beds of lava along the highway resting upon a foundation of rocks that had formed the landscape over which these first flows were poured. This underlying formation consisted of layers of hardened sand, gravel, and mud. A member of the party who had made special study of the region stated that at this point the rocks beneath the lava contained buried in them remains of plants that flourished here before the time of the first lava flows.

It was where the highway skirts a steep bluff, before bending round the curve at Tanner Creek, that search was made for the locality reported by the specialist in history of plants. The cliff rose almost perpendicularly from the pavement. Its irregular face was marked by widely spaced bands of stratification representing difference in materials. In the first large exposure bordering the road, a log of petrified wood projected from rock which had once been the mud and sand that buried it. A few yards away the twisted stem of a dead tree of modern time hung over the cliff. The fringe of forest draping the bluff above was formed of fir, maple, willow, and dogwood. Near the fossil log a living alder clung to the face of the rock, and a sword-fern had fastened its roots in a softer stratum close by.

Rapid search revealed the locality reported to furnish remains of plants. A few strokes with a pick in the soft layer from which the sword-fern grew brought out fragments of rock covered with clean-cut impressions of leaves. There were maple, sweet gum, hickory, and oak, with numerous other kinds. The palæobotanist, who had spent many days collecting in this stratum, began to name the plants discovered. I interrupted to ask if he had obtained the Gingko, a beautiful tree originally known living only in groves about the temples of China and Japan, but found also as a fossil at localities spread widely over the northern half of the world. "Yes, I have found it, but only rarely," was the reply. "Oh," said a student standing near, "I have just seen an impression of a leaf." He ran to the cliff and brought a small slab. On one edge was a narrow imprint showing clear tracery of a leaf like a maiden-hair fern, but duplicated only by the Gingko.

When the print appeared my mind went back to a tree of this strange type planted in the court of the Cosmos Club in Washington. I remembered sitting in the yard at lunch on a warm summer day and pulling down a leaf as reminder of the quest I wished to see for wild Gingkos in the primitive forests of Asia. I thought of the history of the tree as known to the palæobotanist—for millions of years widely spread over the northern hemisphere, and now only a slender residue remaining protected in the sacred forests.

Still looking at the slab, but with my thoughts in Washington, in China, and in the world of past ages, my youngest son brought me back to Columbia Gorge by remarking that he saw the leaf itself still in the rock. "No," I replied. "It is only the impression that remains. In these formations the leaf decays and disappears. Not even a film of coal is left from the carbon which it originally contained." "But the leaf is there," he said. Then, to prove the truth of my statement, taking the specimen, I pulled apart the layers on which the impression was made, and as they separated, clinging to the print, we saw a brown fragment of a leaf with one edge lifted and moving in the wind. The structure was that of a Gingko, time-bronzed and shrivelled—

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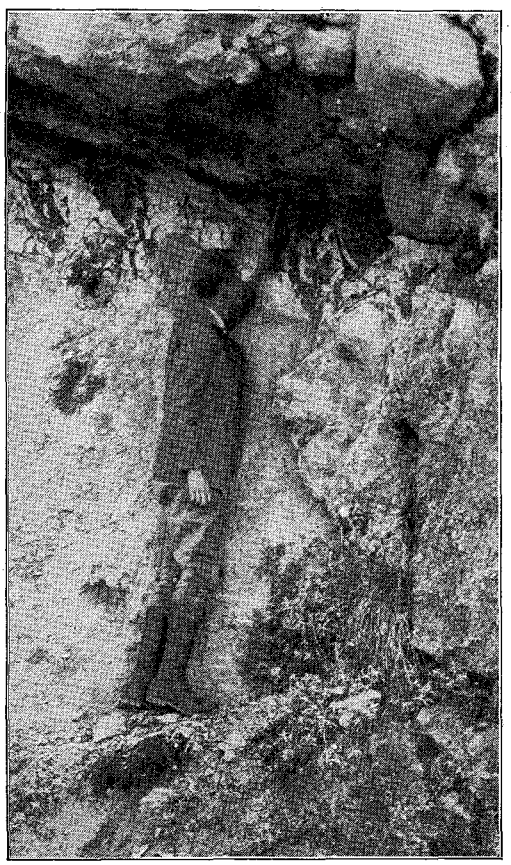
but a leaf, and not merely the trace of its form upon the rock.

My eyes turned to the bluff from which the fragment came. Beyond the layers of sand and mud in which the leaf had been entombed, rose cliffs of lava, stepping up



Locality at which the "fragment" of a Gingko leaf was found in Columbia Gorge.

and up to the rim of the gorge. I looked across the chasm the river had cut, and then saw again the remnant of the Gingko fluttering in the breeze. Since last the wind had stirred this fragile thing, a mountain had piled itself upon it. The floods of melted rock had sealed it in. And then the river, sawing for ages through the mass, had made easy its liberation by the hammer of a student seeking to know the truth about the past.

In careful wrappings the Gingko fragment from Columbia Gorge crossed the continent to tell still further details of its history through microscopic examination of its structure. At the laboratory in Washington it was lifted from the rock to which it adhered, and after careful preparation came to the table of the microscope. By its side lay a similar portion of a Gingko leaf from the tree in the court-yard of the Cosmos Club.

The expert first examined the modern leaf, noting the pattern of its cells. Then the ancient fragment took its place in the field of magnification. The lighter tint of the living leaf was replaced by brown of the specimen from beneath the lavas, but pattern of leaf and form of cell were as much alike as are two closely related ferns or oaks of today.

As he moved it about under the microscope, the specialist ran his eye rapidly over the surface of the ancient leaf-blade. He had hoped to find all details of structure present, but the guard cells bordering the breathing pores were not to be seen. He ventured the suggestion that "perhaps after all this never was a living, growing thing, but only an accidental resemblance to a leaf, or an incomplete experiment in creation." "Possibly," I replied, "you are looking at the wrong side of the leaf." The fragment was reversed. A few quick shifts followed, as the object was moved across the field of vision. Suddenly there was close examination of something that caught his eye. He changed the focus, and then motioned me to his seat at the microscope.

Looking down on the illuminated leaf, I saw dotting its surface characteristic pairs of cells which guard the pores through which plants obtain what they require from the air. It was clear that in this specimen, as in the green Gingko from the living tree near by, these little mouths had opened and closed through the rounds of daily life for a season. And then on a late summer day, as a golden leaf with its work completed, it had whirled down to the stream that buried it.

For a moment the fragment faded from

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clear focus, as I remembered the leaf where it lay beneath the wall of the canyon in layers of rock that had been mudwashed upon it ages before. And then the eye of my mind did what as yet no man-made instrument has accomplished. Through the assured reality of this leaf, as it was then and had been so long ago, a view was opened across the eons connecting present and past. In that sweep of vision it was not possible to avoid the panorama of history just as it had occurred. Glowing lavas crept out, flow on flow, through ages to build the mountain; and then a river began its work of fashioning the canyon. Suddenly my friend inquired: Had I seen the guard-cells? "Yes, and also travelled out across the continent, and back through time so far I might not guess the distance."

The cliffs in which the Gingko lay entombed in Columbia Gorge are included in Mount Hood National Forest. Some years ago a portion of the area was set aside by the Forest Service as Columbia Gorge Park. Within this region, by help of simple cards of description and direction, the traveller is assisted in his effort to know the lessons of the place more intimately. When next you visit the gorge, approaching Tanner Creek on the highway from the west, you will find a simple metal card marking the cliff in which the Gingko leaf was found, and in which others still rest. At the foot of the wall you will see a Gingko-tree planted from stock that grew about the temples in Japan. As it grows its branches will brush the rocks in which the ancient leaves are buried.

If you frequent the canyon you will find that no matter how often you follow the highway from Portland to the Columbia, there is always a thrill when the ridge above Crown Point is crossed and suddenly the gorge appears. It may be that to some this panorama expresses itself solely in terms of superficial form and beauty. Looking often over the valley, it has seemed to me that no one could view the picture without finding revealed something of that movement of creation of which it is the result. Commanding as are features of external beauty, evidences of the process of making portrayed are of such significance that details of the spectacle must be recognized as only incidents in a moving panorama. To know the whole story takes nothing from appreciation of form and feature as they appear at the moment. This knowledge only extends our vision. We come to realization that the elements of grandeur comprised in bulk and static strength have their present values because they are residual demonstrations of power exerted in a great work of construction.

Impression of a Gingko leaf on the rock at locality where the "fragment of a leaf" was found in Columbia Gorge.

To-day we begin to see through all nature the movement of great forces involved in the process of creation. As this panorama opens we glory in our growing power of comprehension. Then on a rare occasion, in an unexpected region, there appears a new expression of reality far transcending that built upon previous experience and imagination. This flash of understanding, with widening horizon, can come to each individual as veritable revelation. It may bring realization of unmeasured power bound in the atom, another universe beyond the stars, a new vista in the past, or an explanation of some baffling phase in human life.

We may stand often, as it were upon the mountain, with the elements spreading their power before us, and yet miss the gentler message that makes it possible

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to see behind the face of nature and read the movement of its mind. It was under such circumstances that the fragment of a leaf—meaningless, excepting as it helped support a cliff above—opened the doors upon a living past. There fire, earthquake, and the flowing power that cleft the mountain, each was seen to have its part in building order and beauty into the world in which our lot is cast.

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# Songs for Myself

BY KATHERINE REEVES

### LONELY SONG

I WENT into the meadow
And sat beside a stone.
I had a very pleasant time
Being there alone.

An ant got in my sandal—
I felt him near the strap.
A bluebird flying over
Dropped feathers in my lap.

A stalk of crimson clover
Got fastened in my belt.
There was a little, lonely wind—
*I* knew how sad he felt.

### WAR

I WENT away all by myself
To make a cornstalk tent—
But Buddy knew where I was gone—
He put his Indian feathers on
And followed where I went.

We crossed the cornfield desert
And set up our teepees.
We had a battle with our bows—
Buddy was the Navajos,
And I was Cherokees.

### SHORE SONG

THE waves are other children running in
To play a game along the dusk-dim beach—
Children with silver sandals on their feet
Kicking the shore, treading the twilight's rim,
Holding their lacy hands above their heads
To feel the flutter of the new moon's wings.

The waves are other children growing tired,
Growing too weary as the night comes down
Even to loose the sandals from their feet,
Even to weep because the little moon
Keeps out of reach of lacy finger-tips.

There they lie sleeping on the dusk-dim beach,
There they lie sleeping in their silver shoes.

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# Other Joys

BY LOUISE SAUNDERS
Author of "Sentinels," "The Knave of Hearts," etc.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY EDWARD SHENTON

*THEN cried the messenger: "Come, cease thy grieving. Thy joy was terrible and exquisite. But here are other joys, for God is kind——"*

Other joys! No, that was not what she wanted. If God were kind, he would let her keep her grief, always, always, as keen and sharp as it was now. "Time cures all things," they told her stupidly; "you will get over it." But that was the one thing that she dreaded; that time might take it away from her, might dull the agony of sorrow that filled her, was all of her, like a keen, sharp sword in the sheath of her body. Their joy had been terrible and exquisite, but just as terrible, more exquisite, was the pain of losing him. It was all she had left. She would keep it. No one had ever suffered as she suffered. There was no tenderness in it, no sweet self-pity. His death had come like the sudden blast of an explosion that had laid waste her life, bared it to the arid rock. She would not try to plant it again with feeble, stunted things where before had been such luxuriance.

"Let me die. Let me die. Let me die," she had whispered, shuddering, between her clenched teeth, again and again, in those first days that were no more awful than these days, though almost a year had passed. Then sometimes that insistent whisper would become an inward shout, though soundless, like a volcanic eruption under the sea. She could do nothing but pace up and down her room, her handkerchief pressed to her lips, throw herself on her bed, tear open her dress to pummel with her fists on her heart where the pain burned. Sometimes she would stretch out her arms (her whole body energized until it became merely an instrument of supplication, seemed to stream up to the quiet unseen forces that control the world, as if it must compel their attention by the very blatancy and concentration of its appeal) and implore to be sent where he had gone. And if he were nothing, she would be nothing, too. What had she to do with this world, where people moved about, performing ordinary tasks: shopped, visited each other, laughed? She was like a bee whose wings had been torn from its back, crawling on the floor of a busy hive. She could never be as the others were, never again. Even the chairs in her house, the rugs and hangings and tables, seemed in their comfortable complacency alien to her. She felt that she ought to be surrounded by restless flames.

"Love's sad satiety." Some one had spoken of that, some poet, but he was wrong. She knew. He was wrong! Perhaps if they had been allowed to live together a long time, they might have discovered each other completely, gone to the very bottom of each other, and after that it was conceivable that even their love, which had been so compelling, such a savage adventure—their love that had transformed them to two stern angels before whose fiery swords forbidden doors crashed wide—might have left them, become after many years a little tame, casual, as were the relations of most married people. Satiety! But that was not sad. When one has been permitted to go to the end, had all there is, one should be content. But to have been ruthlessly torn apart, as they were, at the very beginning—dragged away at the opening bars of the symphony—that was not to be borne. It had maimed her forever. She wouldn't recover. She didn't want to recover.

She held her furs close about her throat and walked with bent head against the wind, keeping her eyes on the pavement. "Let me die. Let me die." That phrase threaded through her consciousness as it always did, even when she was talking with people or riding in her motor. It was always there, though sometimes only



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She would stretch out her arms, her whole body . . . merely an instrument of supplication.—Page 135.

like the unnoticed tick of a clock in a room.

At Fifty-ninth Street she turned and walked up-town again through the park. It didn't matter where she went, but to cross that crowded corner, restless with traffic, would require of her a concentration on her surroundings that she was too weary to give. Though there was no point, it was true, in her making any effort to avoid the stream of motors other than the feeling that if she were knocked down, hurt, there would be crowds, questioning policemen. She might be dragged out of the dark retreat of her despair, like some underground animal, into the glare of human activity.

"Let me die." She sat down on one of the empty benches and leaned her head on her hand. Before her were tall wired enclosures, behind which brown deer wandered aimlessly, nibbled at the ground, stared with ruminative eyes over the heads of the little groups of children and their nurses. They were trying to remember something, something that had passed, something, perhaps, that they had never known. Trying to remember, thinking.

It was cold. A torn newspaper, whirled by the wind, caught against her feet. Some empty peanut-shells, with which the bench was untidily strewn, clung to the fur of her coat. She stared at them but made no effort to brush them away.

When she closed her eyes she could feel the vibration of her heart, her hidden heart, beating, beating in the darkness, like a tiny engine on a ship. If only she could plunge at it with her hands and tear it out, tear it out!

She noticed a woman coming slowly toward her, walking in a wavering, aimless way. She

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stopped uncertainly before the bench on which Judith was sitting and started to fumble with her hand-bag of cracked leather. She had closed it, it seemed, with a safety-pin, but the safety-pin would not open. Tightening her lips, she struggled with it, pressing it against a red thumb that protruded from her black knitted glove. Finally she sat down heavily, and, putting her bag to her mouth, bit on the pin, holding her head to one side, like a squirrel cracking a nut. This succeeded and she removed the pin, stuck it into the lapel of her dingy coat, and wiped her mouth with her hand.

Judith leaned back her head again and closed her eyes. That creature, the peanut-shells, the torn papers, they were all alike, all outside. What could they matter to her? "Let me die. Let me die."

After a time she moved restlessly, tapped her foot on the pavement, clenched her fists, and opened her eyes. The woman was still there. But now she held a man's handkerchief bunched together in her two hands as if to hide its griminess. And she continually rolled it about and kneaded it. Every once in a while she would pull out a soiled corner of it, and, drawing down her mouth grotesquely, give a trembling upward rub to her flat nose.

Judith looked at her listlessly, at her long, sagging brown skirt with three rows of dusty braid on the bottom of it; at her feet, knobby with curious hidden excrescences, lying on their sides, the soles of her shoes facing each other. Her hat was of shapeless black straw, with what had been a rose tacked on one side of it. That rose! It had been drenched by rain, scorched by the sun until it was now no more than a colorless bunch of wrinkled bits of cloth. It served no purpose. It was neither useful nor beautiful, and merely stayed there because no one thought about it at all—as superfluous as embroidery would be on a dish-cloth.

The woman kneaded her handkerchief in her hands again, then wiped her eyes. She gave a trembling, liquid sniff.

So this creature too was unhappy. There was, of course, a turgid stream of common misery running through the world. Every one, sooner or later, was caught in it, carried along for a time, muddied by it. That was what her friends kept repeating to her in exasperation at her continued frigid aloofness, her passive disinterest in life now that the decent period of mourning was over. "Really, my dear, you are not the only woman who has lost the man she loves. Good heavens, we all do more or less! But that's no reason—and, after all, to have had him *die* is not as bad as—well, there are other ways of losing a husband, you know." And, though they tried to appear to be very sympathetic and grave as they looked at her, she could tell by the slight smiles lifting the corners of their mouths that they thought her rather absurd. But their amusement made no more impression on her than had their unwelcome sympathy in the beginning. They simply didn't understand. Since life, like some clumsy practical joker, had chosen to strike her happiness from her hands so soon after putting it there, she would always despise it, look upon it with contempt, and never, never forgive or forget. There was a scale of aristocracy in grief; hers was regal, as different, for instance, from the shoddy troubles of that woman next her as is mud from black onyx. Mud, though unpleasant, could be easily dissolved and washed away, but onyx was precious and indestructible.

Her arm on the back of the bench, her chin in her gloved hand, she gazed for a time at the inert, scaly shoes of the woman huddled there.

"Why are you crying?" she said at last.

The woman turned to her, frightened. Her face was blotched and glistening with the easy tears of old age. It was as if the tears had exuded from it everywhere. She started to speak, but her mouth only distorted ludicrously and, staring at Judith, she gave a broken, whining sound, somewhat like the meow of a cat.

"What is it?" Judith asked again impatiently. "You needn't be afraid of me. Are you ill?"

In the syrupy high voice that accompanies the tears of children and old people, she replied: "I got enough to make me cry, God knows!"

"Have you?"

"It ain't as if I ever done no harm to nobody," she went on. "I've tried to work honest all my life. I'm a poor

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woman and I ain't never done harm to nobody and now—" Her voice rose in a thin quaver. She choked and coughed.

"Well, go on," said Judith. "What has happened?"

"I used to do cleaning down to Hoffheimer's restaurant. Every morning at four regular I was there, scrubbing under the tables and mopping up that that was spilled from the parties. But it's sloppy work and the wet give me cold. I swear to God I wasn't away more than two nights, but when I come back they laid me off. I'm a poor woman, but I wasn't away more than two nights——"

"Laid you off?" Judith interrupted. "What does that mean?"

"They got another one to come in. I lost it. It aren't fair, that's what it is."

Hoffheimer's at four in the morning! Judith shuddered. Cigarette ends floating, dirty glasses, all the repulsive aftermath of cheap gaiety—"It must have been very unpleasant work," she said. "I should think that you would be relieved not to have to do it any more."

"It was a grand job," sighed the woman. She began to cry again. "My husband, he's sick. I don't know what we're going to do now, honest I don't."

Judith sat for a time in silence. "There is plenty of misery in the world." Yes, but wasn't it, most of it, like this, misery that could easily be relieved by a change of circumstance or a little money? Money! She smiled contemptuously. And they could compare it with her sorrow that could never be lightened, never, by all the riches, by anything that existed on earth! Suppose that she proved it, merely for her own satisfaction, merely because there was nothing else to do.

"Where do you live?" she asked, suddenly rising to her feet.

The woman looked up, startled.

"Where do you live?"

"Over near First Avenue," she said at last.

"Come," Judith commanded. "We'll go to your house. I may be able to help you."

"Help me? Are you giving me a job?"

"You'll see later what I intend to do. Get up."

The woman lifted herself laboriously from the bench, stuffed the handkerchief in her bag, and fumbled with uncertain fingers at the safety-pin on her coat.

"Don't trouble to fasten it now," said Judith coldly.

The woman hung back a minute, afraid, but as Judith started, without turning her head to see if she were following, toward the entrance to the park, she shuffled after her.

They stood together side by side on the pavement. Judith raised her hand as a bright taxicab rushed by. It stopped, slid up to the curb, and backed. The driver leaned over and opened the door. "Go in," she said.

The woman put one foot on the step and the taxi leaned sideways, seemed to groan with the weight of her. She drew up the other foot, and then, standing on the step and clinging to the door, she looked around over her shoulder timorously.

"It's all right," Judith encouraged her. "Please hurry a little."

Stumbling over her skirt, she entered the little brown interior and fell to the seat. Judith followed swiftly. "Now tell me the address of your house."

"Four hundred and two East Thirty-ninth Street. But it ain't a house; it's only a room." As the car plunged through the traffic she clung desperately to the edge of the seat. She had never, Judith supposed, been in a taxicab before. Well, that was nothing to complain about, certainly.

A faint odor of perfume mingled with the smell of dusty leather in the car. The nearness of this woman, breathing heavily through her mouth, only made her more acutely aware of her own exquisiteness, of the delicate poignancy of her grief, not coarsely smeared over the surface, but hidden deep in the darkness of her heart. And she stared ahead of her as they rode along in silence, only conscious of her companion in the detached and completely impersonal way that she might be conscious of some rough bundle, tied with paper and string, beside her on the seat.

The taxicab stopped before a dark and dingy doorway squeezed between a second-hand clothing-shop and a vegetable-stall. The outside of the shop was black with men's coats, hanging with outstretched sleeves, bunches of worn trou-

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sers, overalls, and sweaters. Before it stood a table, piled high with whitish-gray articles and surmounted by a sign, "Your choice 25c," scrawled in pencil.

Though the door was open, the air, when they entered the little discolored hallway, was thick, a blended fog of odors so disagreeable that Judith felt suffocated, as if she had stepped into a pool of stagnant water.

So this creature too was unhappy.—Page 137.

On the lowest step of the narrow stairs a little girl in a ragged sweater sat sucking a large and poisonous-looking piece of candy. Her hair was tied at the top of her head with a bit of string, but long wisps of it hung over her eyes and down her cheeks. "Hello, Mrs. Cooney," she shrilled at them. Her smile showed red gums and tiny discolored teeth.

"Hello, Clara." The woman stroked the child's hair back from her forehead with a stiff hand and added absently: "She's a grand nice little girl, aren't you?"

Smiling widely again, the child sidled nearer and shyly put out a sticky little hand to stroke the fur of Judith's coat.

"Don't be touching the lady's coat," warned the woman sharply. "You might dirty it."

Judith closed her eyes. Really the atmosphere of the place was unbearable. She felt as if she were going to faint. "Please show me to your room," she said. "I didn't come here to talk to children."

Mrs. Cooney mounted the steps painfully, one at a time, her left hand on the stair-rail, the other on the wall. Her faded skirt sagged and swayed behind her. Suddenly she stopped and turned, glared down at Judith.

"Say, what did you come for, anyway? It wasn't to talk to no children, not you! Well, what are you doing here? That's what I want to know."

Her face was terrible, like that of an old ferocious tigress, baring her teeth, snarling and cringing at the same time—cringing before a power that she knew must inevitably conquer her, yet snarling under

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her hatred of it. But coolly Judith met her attack.

"I came to help you," she replied in a clear voice, and looking her straight in the eyes; "if you behave in that way, I'll go."

Mrs. Cooney held out a trembling hand. "No—no! I didn't mean no harm. God knows there aren't a poorer woman in this world than me."

"Then go on," said Judith.

She climbed the stairs again, muttering sullenly under her breath. At the top floor she led the way down a night-black passage and opened a door. Judith followed her into a choked little room. An old man was sitting in a chair by the window. She looked about her. Some repulsive blankets had been thrown across the table, an overturned saucepan lay on the bed, and on the floor at her feet were an unwashed cup and a plate. She felt a cold disgust at these people who could live in such a way, like two cats or dogs, without the least effort to make their surroundings attractive or even clean. The lower classes were inferior certainly. They didn't even notice, she supposed.

The man rose uncertainly and came forward on stocking feet. His trousers and his shirt were darkly sodden, and they seemed to cling to him adhesively, as if they had grown to be part of his body. His head and his big, swollen red hands hanging at his sides trembled incessantly.

"That you, Nellie?" he asked, peering at his wife, and his words were almost without consonants, spoken in his throat with his mouth open. He caught sight of Judith and stared at her in feeble astonishment. "What's the matter? Anything happened?"

"They laid me off at Hoffheimer's; that's what's happened," said Mrs. Cooney curtly. She brought a chair for Judith, first shaking it so that a pile of miscellaneous things fell to the floor.

"I won't sit down," said Judith.

"Laid you off, did they? Laid you off."

"I met your wife in the park," Judith explained. "She told me that you were in trouble."

"Yes," he said, "yes. We—" He sighed, then leaned over slowly and moved the plate aimlessly a few inches on the floor. "Well, it will all come right, maybe—it——"

"That's what I came here to find out," Judith interrupted. "Everything will be all right; you will be happy again if I give you some money, won't you?"

"Well," he said, "money is—money is—" He seemed to be unable to finish a sentence. A cloud inevitably floated through his brain and obscured the words, but he searched for them patiently. "Money makes——"

"*Won't* you?" she said impatiently turning to his wife.

"God love you," Mrs. Cooney exclaimed, "for this! If you could give us a little to tide us over, like, I'd work for it. Some cleaning now——"

"I have no work for you," said Judith. Cleaning, good heavens! As if there were not enough of that to do for herself. "But—" She opened her bag, then hesitated. "Will you be good enough to clear that table?"

Eagerly, Mrs. Cooney threw the blankets to right and left, and Judith shook her bag over the table. A roll of yellow bills fell noiselessly, some change clattered down and rolled to the floor. Mrs. Cooney, with sudden activity, planted a heavy foot on each coin as if she were stamping on a nest of crawling insects and picked them up.

"Money makes," continued the man staring in front of him, "a lot of difference."

'There really ought,' thought Judith, 'to be some other way of arranging the matter of currency for people.' She felt that she would rather die than touch anything in that room, yet those very twenty-five and fifty cent pieces that she had been carrying in her bag of delicate brocade might have been in such a place before. It was too loathsome to think that they might possibly come back to her again!

And now that it was done, she wanted to get away out of this sordid room, but Mrs. Cooney stood in front of the door, clutching the monev to her coat. She was crying again.

"I don't see why you give us this," she said brokenly, "except you've got a kind heart. I never done nothing for you."

"It isn't necessary," replied Judith, "for you to know why I did it." The woman glanced at her furtively, suddenly chilled. "Are you happy now? Tell me!"

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*From a drawing by Edward Shenton.*

"I'm sorry," she said. "I have nothing for you."—Page 142.



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"Of course I am," she said. "Who wouldn't be happy with all this and a chanst to rest yourself?"

"That's all I wanted to know. No, don't come with me. I can find the way out." She closed the door behind her.

Clara was waiting for her at the head of the stairs with a battered doll that she held conspicuously in one hand. Its yellow wig pointed jauntily to the ceiling, in marked contrast to Clara's own lank strands of hair. She pressed her small body shyly against the wall when Judith appeared, but smiled again, her wide smile.

"Hello," she whispered, and shifted the doll to the other arm.

She wanted money, too, of course. Judith opened her bag, then remembered that it was empty. "I'm sorry," she said. "I have nothing for you." She looked back, slightly uncomfortable, when she was half-way down the stairs, and saw that Clara was still gazing at her, but smiling no longer. The doll had fallen to the floor.

The air, even in that street, was refreshing after the heavy atmosphere she had been breathing. There were no taxicabs in that part of town. Besides—she smiled at the thought—she had no money to pay for one. Well, she could walk. She started grimly toward Fifth Avenue.

She had proved it, easily dispelled an unhappiness that her friends, no doubt, would have dared to say was as deep as hers! Let them show her two people who had loved as greatly as he and she had loved, if that were possible. A man and a woman who had been lifted to the very shrine of ecstasy, torn apart, cast down brutally to earth before they had had time to realize the fulness of their joy. No wonder the fall had broken her, broken her heart, broken all desire to go on, left nothing whole but the remembrance and the pain. To complain of it, to allow it to heal, would be a cringing, a fawning at the hand of fate as that old woman had cringed and fawned.

"Hello, Judy!" said a voice. She looked up. It was Arthur Aldrich. What a nuisance! What a bore! There was no escaping people.

"You shouldn't walk with your head down like that," he went on. "You might run into something. 'Society Matron's Hat Fells Clubman as New Year Ends,' and all that. By the way, Happy New Year!"

"Thank you," said Judith sombrely. He had turned around and was walking beside her.

She stopped. "Please don't come any farther, Arthur. I don't feel like talking to any one."

"Oh, that's all right. I'll do the talking." He swung a banana-skin out of her path with his cane. "You've got to have some one with you around here, to save you from the banana-skins. 'Society Matron Hits Pavement in Congested District.' Where are you going?"

"Nowhere in particular—home, I suppose."

"Come and have a cup of tea."

"No," said Judith decidedly, "I never do that sort of thing now."

"Never drink tea!" cried Arthur, astonished. "Tea's all right and New Year's Eve is a fine time to break resolutions."

"I couldn't—possibly." They walked along in silence for a time. 'Oh, how I hate everything,' thought Judith. 'I wish I could die.'

"Can *I* say anything?" ventured Arthur at last, "or would you rather that we kept it up like this as if we were going to a fu—I mean, as if we were in a parade or something?"

"Really, Arthur," Judith answered wearily, "I don't care very much one way or the other. I don't have to listen, I suppose."

"All right," said Arthur radiantly, "that's fine! I'll tell you all about my trip and how the little porpoises played about the bow of the boat and how I lost my umbrella and what the captain said to me on the third day out—" He laid his hand gently on her arm. "Judith—please let me give you something to buck you up. You look terribly tired."

Yes, she was tired. The tears welled into her eyes. She was exhausted. "Here, taxi!" he shouted, and, when it stopped, he half lifted her into it.

Perhaps it was the same one that she had had before, but, instead of Mrs. Cooney, here was Arthur Aldrich, in his impeccable clothes, thoughtfully looking down at his stick between his knees and

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rolling it back and forth between the palms of his hands. She felt an uncontrollable desire to laugh or cry.

"Things are so—so funny," she gasped hysterically.

He looked at ner, eagerly anxious to share her mood. "Yes," he said. "Funny little taxi, isn't it?"

Judith took out her handkerchief and held it to her eyes. She remembered Mrs. Cooney's handkerchief and put her own hastily back in her purse.

"How long have you felt that way?" he asked, still looking at her.

"What way?"

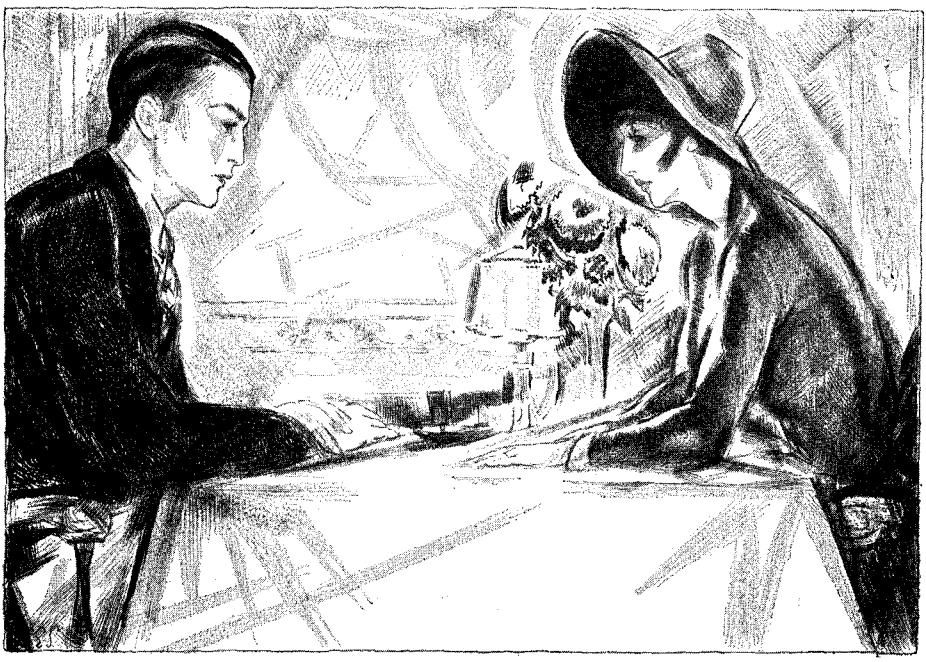
"That things were funny."

"They are," she said, "horribly funny—funnily horrible. Even a skull can grin, you know."

He jumped at that as if he had heard a shot. "Now look here, Judith," he said earnestly, "do you know what's the matter with you? You're hungry. That's the sort of thing the Russians say, and the reason they say it is because they haven't enough to eat. 'Even a skull can grin, you know.' What a way to talk! You need something to eat."

"All right." She leaned back and closed her eyes. "Take me anywhere you please but only for a few minutes."

Though she held her head high as they walked through the lobby of the hotel, filled with people, she felt almost frightened, defenseless. She wanted to clutch the back of his coat, like a child who follows a grown person through a crowded place, for she knew that if she were left alone, even for an instant, it would be agony.



Let him love her, let him tell her that he loved her.—Page 144.

When they had sat down on either side of a little table with a shaded light between them, she stared at the cloth, afraid to raise her eyes. Suppose that some one should see her, some one who knew how long she had kept away from all this, wondered at her coming back.

Music filled the place. It flung out gay, ascending interrogations and flippant, laughing answers, made golden statements, then ridiculed them swiftly like a boxing clown, shook over them a bright bewilderment of sound as many-colored as the costume of a harlequin.

"Buttered toast?" asked Arthur Aldrich.

"Anything. It doesn't matter."

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He was silent for a long time, but the music kept on, quaintly solemn, yet ridiculing all solemnity. She knew that he was looking at her, felt him study her face, and suddenly she became conscious of herself, of her long lashes, the delicacy of her lowered lids, veined with blue, the curves of her mouth.

"You are divinely lovely," she heard him say in a low voice, "more lovely than ever before."

She raised her eyes and met his. To meet a man's eyes, across the intimacy of a little table, where you were the more alone because surrounded by indifferent strangers, there was something in that, something that she had forgotten.

"Judith," he stammered, "if you only knew——"

She drew a long breath, then, slowly, rested her chin on her hands, smiled at him, and, raising her eyebrows interrogatively, she said: "If I only knew—what?"

"How much I love you."

"Arthur, don't—" But faintly, like a photograph of a vivid fabric, his words, the intense, almost fierce look in his eyes, put her again into living connection with what she had lost. She had been cut off from it completely, and here at last was the only bridge, thrown across the dark flood of the past eleven months, that touched it.

Let him love her, let him tell her that he loved her again and again in the words that he whom she had loved had used.

She looked at her hand lying on the table-cloth. "Take it, take it," she implored him, though not aloud. Almost as if he had heard she felt his close over it, lightly at first. Questioningly he stroked her wrist with his thumb, until all at once he gripped it, crushed her fingers together with warm strength. And the cry in her heart was not now "Let me die," but "Come back. Come back to me through him."

In spite of herself, she felt the hard lines of her grief dissolving — dissolving — "Here are other joys!"

But that, of course, was not true. She would never respond to this at all. She would only receive it passively because it was the same thing, though only the merest shred of what she had had before and because it was the sole way to bring its memory poignantly back to her. Her friends would think that she had got over it, forgotten, as they prophesied she would, but they, as usual, didn't understand. This was different. She had proved this afternoon in the case of that woman . . .

But what had she so triumphantly proved this afternoon? She couldn't remember.

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# Winter Sycamores

BY GRACE NOLL CROWELL

To see a winter sycamore
Against a sombre sky
Is such a tender thing for one
To mark a bleak day by:
Its delicate embroideries,
Its sprays of dotted lace
Become a veil, quite sheer enough,
For any woman's face.

A blue sky, and a sycamore—
White-barked and bare of leaf,
Can make a sorrowing heart forget
Its ancient, clinging grief;
And if upon a fragile bough
A feathered torch be lit—
No day will be quite colorless
To one remembering it.

A sudden view of sycamores
Across the setting sun,
Would burn its fiery glory on
The soul of any one.
And there is nothing lovelier
In all the world, I know,
Than the etching of bare sycamores
Upon the afterglow.

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# The Spirit of Society

BY W. C. BROWNELL
Author of "Standards," "Style," "Democratic Distinction," etc.

FOR successful flowering our individualist national spirit stands in most conspicuous need of co-operation from the spirit of society. So far as communities are concerned, distinction is eminently not born but made—at all events, a cultivated product. Like the civilization from which it is inseparable, it is a social result. Indeed any community's due proportion of distinguished individuals is unattainable except through social influences, personal distinction being distinctly not self-polish but the polish resulting from relations with other people, the early stages of which are devoted to what is familiarly known as getting one's corners rubbed off. Socially speaking, corners are a superfluity. Reviewing, early in his career, the fiction of the Kingsleys, Henry James declared: "There is, in our opinion, no such thing as a gentleman in the rough. A gentleman is born of his polish." Few Americans would agree with a definition excluding the "born gentleman," a product of nature in which we are, naturally (since nature rather than art has hitherto been our reliance), predisposed to conceive ourselves exceptionally rich. The "born gentleman" is one of the most popular herotypes of our pioneer romance. Mr. John Oakhurst, for example, must still retain the affection of all those indebted to Bret Harte for the honor of his acquaintance. And we should all agree that a gentleman is not necessarily born of ancestral polish. Mrs. Putnam, whose historical study of "The Lady" includes penetrating observations on her counterpart, points out that "a line of gentlemen" needs "at least occasional lapses into manhood"; adding reassuringly: "moreover the gentleman, in the worst sense of the term, is numerically negligible." In fine, with us the man who is "instinctively a gentleman" appears too frequently in circumstances of obvious crudity to warrant us in according to James, in spite of the mature consideration he had perhaps given the matter, that the "gentleman in the rough" does not exist. To this extent, we should generally be inclined to hold with the muscularly Christian Kingsleys. But it is quite probable that in the ordinary acceptation of the term there is no such thing as a *distinguished* gentleman in the rough, and quite certain that though a gentleman may be born of his polish, his polish is not born of him. It is born of association with his fellows. He did not invent the p's and q's which it is nevertheless incumbent on him to mind—and not merely to mind, but to mind automatically. In the matter of polish he owes his distinction to those social interrelations which, sufficiently developed, are capable of reduplicating him indefinitely, and thus securing the happy synthetic result of an organic society whose elements severally share the wider distinction toward which they jointly contribute. These interrelations are themselves social forces and cultural agencies, inspired and set at work by the spirit of society of which they are the energetic as well as the exemplary expression.

It follows, of course, that *their* cultivation is, in turn, a prerequisite to distinction, unattainable if they are left in their generally native state of torpor. And they have not been very markedly cultivated among us hitherto on anything approaching a national scale. But *apriori* there is nothing in democracy to prevent their cultivation—nothing that does not involve at least an equivalent inhibition in any other form of social organization; that is, if society as a whole is considered, rather than a special class either in small and isolated communities, as anciently with us, or, as in older countries, in a strictly classified society to which the



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other classes are sacrificed. "There is more to be said for democracy as a form of society," says Dean Inge, an authority not usually accounted optimistic, "than for democracy as a form of government," and as a form of government the world at large has already been converted to it. With what may be said, what, in fact, has been said for it as a form of government by our own history, securing as well as stamping through its individualism our national character, we are not altogether dissatisfied. But the individualism which tends to produce character does not gild it. And, ungilded, even character is subject to the tarnish of time. The graces of life proceed from the spirit of society. Even "escape" from "the common lot" requires co-operative aid. Moreover, character as we are apt to conceive it means integrity, quite naturally associated with the individual independence prerequisite to a self-sufficing soundness. To be happy the hermit must be good—letting who will be clever.

Fundamentally, therefore, the watchword of character with us is duty rather than development, which latter is a social criterion. Character with us connotes the constancy of principle, as in more elaborately organized societies it does the enterprise of energy. Its ideal is steadfastness, not growth, and its force is conserved rather than distributed. I speak, of course, of our familiar usage and instinctive attitude, which do not imply an inability to discriminate *nuances* of the kind. Expressing a hostile view, we should, for example, in spite of his protean energy, instinctively describe Byron or Napoleon as lacking character. We should indeed incline to reverse Goethe's distinction affirming that talent is best builded in seclusion, character amid the stress of the world at large. All the more do we need a larger experience of the world at large. Our experience in the greatest of world struggles ought not to intimidate us. But in the struggles of the workaday world of social development our view of character, integral as it is, and illustrated as it is so copiously and generally by individual example, is obviously a limited view. More "contacts," domestic and foreign, should be salutary as broadening both our conception of character and our character itself—rendering them less concentrated and more social, developing them, in a word, even at the cost of some dilution.

The spirit of society, I conceive, may properly be taken to include within its scope of influence and inspiration the entire field of the relations between individuals and not merely be confined, as conventionally it is, to the sphere of social conventions. In this wider field the agencies of man's thought, feeling, and will would divide into personalities on the one hand, and their interactions on the other. It is clearly the interactions that, pursuing distinction, we ought to cultivate more actively than we do. It is they that, subjectively speaking, constitute civilization. Save in common, man can neither educate his mind, nor cultivate his sentiment, nor refine his behavior, nor produce his art. The forces that deal with these relations are the synthetic forces that compose and construct and create as plainly in the spiritual as in the natural realm, in the imaginative as in the actual; as in the matter of saints, it is their "communion" in which we are charged to believe, not the stylites among them that we are charged to emulate. It is the converging and co-operative forces, the forces of concert, that exert the cultural pressure which moulds man into mankind by modifying his habits and conforming his nature in order to fit him for a functional place in the organism they are ceaselessly building and rebuilding. To this pressure, an individualistic democracy is bound to be a little recalcitrant. We submit, but rather with reluctance than readily—though, to translate Epictetus freely, when submission is inevitable it is sensible to submit gracefully. As an English friend observed to an inquiring American anxious to know if a Duke had to go to church: "He'd better." In our case the only alternative would be, abandoning altogether the path leading to distinction, which we must seek in common, if at all, to keep on marking time as individuals. Progress in this respect and in this instance must not only be "purposive" and directed; it calls for concert, not merely enterprise and initiative, something besides and something superior to mere effort energizing inertia. We need

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to achieve an organic structure, not merely maintain a united front; and a national composition, not merely "assembled and met together," but mutual.

The ideal, being definitely a social one, is beyond the competence of individualism; and distinction, being an incidental resultant of much else and itself neither a tool nor a target, individual pursuit of it might but increase the number of prigs. This side of chauvinism, what is patriotism in the community, in the individual may easily be priggishness personified. There is always the peril of the sense of superiority lying in wait for the solitary bent on outshining others—a self-regardant peril from which the objective pursuit of perfection is free. It is possible, of course, that we shall collectively fail of distinction, not because it is attainable only by the few, but because it is antipathetic to the many. The fault—if in the future any one is to be at fault at all—will be the "remnant's." If distinction cannot be made a conjoint and universal ideal, it had better be replaced. We are not going to cease being democratic because a few of us aim at being superior—the proportion of new democrats, native and naturalized, being what some of the newest might call a "progressive constant." Collectively, however, the ideal of distinction is of the simplest, though, like other ideals of manifold significance and complicated conditioning (and being itself an abstraction), difficult to state save in the abstract terms that savor of pedantry. But in this case simplicity is sufficiently shown by the fact that it has already been illustrated definitely, if with but approximate perfection, by various societies, in various epochs and in various fields, the record of which is the honor roll of history, and proves that though often costly and not always completely practicable, it has its—resplendent—practical side. Realization of ideals is rarely either easy or inexpensive, but on a scale of any importance it is always inspiring. In architecture, for instance, between five and six hundred Byzantine edifices fell to pieces in Constantinople alone, I believe, before the style was established, and the tragic catastrophe of Beauvais affirms possibilities of solid achievement though recording incidental failure.

Ideality in the practical sphere has certainly been a more wide-spread influence with us than in countries where "the man in the street" has less power and public policy is in the hands of privilege, determining it in secrecy and executing it by force. There have been compensations in the matter of distinction for our having had a secretary of state who insisted that science was humbug and poetry fact, and, in the guise of a paladin contended for the right, as acquired by purchase, of parents who agreed with him, if a majority, to impose this view on the children of those who did not. We wash our "Hebrew old clothes" as Carlyle two generations ago called such obscurantism, in blazing publicity, but perhaps they get washed as early and often and as clean as those that the most eminent of modern British prime ministers arranged to have worn a little longer when countermanding government aid to the archæological expedition that had unearthed proof of a pre-Noachian deluge. There is more than a shade of difference, too, between the cases—the suggestive difference between tutelage of the public and its pampering—which both political and social philosophers would estimate differently in accordance with their predilections.

In their bearing on democratic distinction, however, such cases call practically for social rather than political reflection. Just as, in the words of Mr. Arthur Colton, "Wherever good writing is general it is a social phenomenon," and, as Mr. Strunsky remarks of the new vulgarizing biography, "An adult generation ought to resent detailed proofs of the theorem that there is no Santa Claus and there are no fairies," it is parochialism not paranoia that leads the politician to debate science with the savant. What at least our own extravagances of this order evidence is not a lack of popular political sagacity or a defect inherent in democratic polity, so much as social immaturity. The factitiously mature find this particularly trying when it is brought close to them, so mysteriously unsustaining is the illusion of superiority actively shrinking from the proximity of, to use Emerson's words, "dust" to "grandeur." But the "superior" would find it particularly salutary should they do more and

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think less about it. They would gain more by mixing than by aloofness. And public opinion anywhere would gain, too. Popular eccentricities of obscurantism flourished with especial luxuriance under the Russian Czars of yesterday, as during the feudal anarchy of mediæval Europe. Public opinion is, to be sure, deeply affected by the institutional structure of government. We who believe in its institutionally secured, wide-spread, and inclusive dissemination, its articulateness and ultimate authority, should be the last to affirm the contrary. But public opinion is affected far more immediately by its subjection, thus secured, to the spirit of society in general. Indeed, of this spirit, rather than an effect it may properly be called a phase, through which the social spirit manifests itself in the various fields of thought and feeling. It manifests itself largely in the political field with us, because this field is with us of such preponderant proportions and such vital interest; people with us feel their responsibility about it as they do about nothing else, and more universally than anywhere else such realization of responsibility is to be found.

It is, nevertheless, to the particular stage which the evolution of the spirit of society has reached among us that is to be ascribed the level of the general mind as well as the manners which reflect it. The stage reached among the Athenians, where popular suffrage assigned the prize to Æschylus or Sophocles, as the case might be, in their competitive dramatic contests; that which made the record of its expression in the France of Louis XIV and Louis XV as presented by Voltaire an historical classic; that which in general is reflected so resplendently in the wealth of memoirs in which French literature is so unmatched abroad—and only matched at all by the plays of its own master spirit which dramatize the stuff of them; that illustrated by the Elizabethan and Restoration dramas and by the drama itself indeed in all ages and everywhere, to say nothing of, in varying degree, both history and fiction and in truth all serious literature—what are these but severally expressions of that "humanization of man in society" which is Arnold's concise, comprehensive, adequate, and serviceable definition of civilization? Many times in its history have men saved mankind—from the state at Athens, from the schools at Alexandria, from paganism at the turn of the Roman Empire, from mediævalism at the Renaissance, from the Papacy at the German Reformation, from slavery at the French Revolution. This is a world of imperfections, and, needing both, every epoch and every people needs to balance the forces of individualism and those of society by curbing the excess of one and increasing the efficiency of the other, as its own case may intrinsically prescribe.

No doubt fate very considerably takes charge of the matter, and the favorite method of fate in furthering progress is, apparently, the method of advance by action and reaction—a method beside which that of the snail seems rapid and that of the crab direct. Patience is praiseworthy, but shuffling the cards is the price of it. If our individualism shows signs of having really reached its climax of utility, we cannot too much occupy ourselves with the matter of its restraint and a corresponding release of such social forces as we possess and may develop. Such signs are, I think, quite generally to be remarked by any attentive observer in our day and generation, and more and more accordingly the beneficence of the spirit of society will appear as the individualistic confusion of our social life becomes more and more apparent, and proves more and more unsatisfactory. The popularization by the "herd" of individual eccentricity gives it unedifying relief—the more so if, as at present, it is eccentricity that particularly arouses the herd's emulation. Doubtless it marks a stage of transition to greater social maturity. But all transitional trails are uncomfortable, and the sooner comparative stability of some kind or other is reached, the sooner will the freedom of "the upper air" be open to us.

In speaking of social maturity one need not, surely, be suspected of having etiquette in mind. The devotee of punctilio must end by being, like the rejected lover of the poet, ashamed through all his being "to have loved so slight a thing." Still, strictly speaking, etiquette is at worst but the pedantry of decorum, and one must admit its ancillary value, and even acknowledge that it would be a grand thing

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to have its decorous influence, certainly not intensified but extended. In a time when, for example, though it be still true that "the Queen of Spain has no legs," the same, happily, cannot be said of the rest of her sex—any more than of the rest of their charms—it is little likely to be extended too far. To-day Gyges, unless a glutton, need not wear his ring, and even the "nasty old men"—as Strachey called Victoria's uncles—inspecting Phryne in Gérôme's picture, would compliment her with less fixity of attention. In reserving pudicity to its women a community necessarily somewhat sacrifices chivalry in its men, and the American man has been declared a model for Frenchmen by a French writer, as a being too chivalrous to indulge the *regard scrutateur* in regarding members of the modest sex. Probably the present modes have robbed him, in some degree, of this quite genuine distinction. In the too casual glance of Victorian days women may have felt the lack of something guaranteeing real interest, but by presenting him with the facts they have spared him exercise of the imagination, forfeiting the glamour born of the glimpse, but vanishing under the gaze. He now perhaps lifts his eyes from feet to faces in more listless mood. Etiquette, however, may ultimately solve his difficulties by reinstating the cursory glance which now the sated observer of such riches feels to be grudging even when unrewarding to prolong. On the other hand, rapt from us they might easily be missed and "rainy daisies" might have to begin their missionary labors all over again. "The flash of feminine legs brightens the boulevard," says a French social critic. The "leg show" has descended from the stage to the street, and it is in the interest of democracy that the goatish gloating, ascribed to the old-time "bald-head row" of the orchestra, should be diluted by dissemination among the rest of us, on whom it no longer "has anything." Good sense is undeniably at the bottom of much etiquette, and by the time extravagances get into the canon, standards of decorum have shifted and variations become eccentricities, which are always anti-social. The prevailing is always bearable, no doubt, and only arouses uneasiness when we are driven to ask "what are we coming to?"

The forestalling of friction, in whatever field, through familiarity with the appropriate technic is always welcome—that of etiquette aiding digestion, offering an anodyne to anxiety and affording practicable "release" and "escape," even, for the restive. Order introduced into self-expression would be a benign simplification of our complicated existence, so multifariously solicited by so many selves. Too much, too minute, too arbitrary, and, above all, too sudden codification of accepted usage would, perhaps, defeat its purpose by increasing the self-consciousness it is designed to eliminate. The subject has its practical difficulties, though just now given a fillip of interest by the irruption of manuals of it—a social rather than a literary phenomenon, and probably of salutary effect upon those of taste robust enough to surmount the *chevaux-de-frise* of its advertising, and thus designated as its proper public. But with or without adventitious aids, and in larger as well as lesser social circumstance, we so plainly need the results only to be obtained from the cultivation, calculated or casual, of the relations between people—moral, intellectual, and æsthetic—under the influence of the spirit of society, that no invocation of this spirit can be deemed irrelevant. If etiquette merely aids indecorum in the long run to rank as decorum, some more fundamental force is requisite to deal effectively with the more important, though more indefinable, matter of decency. Decency is a matter of feeling, and lies too deep for prescription in detail. Those who don't feel it categorically deny its imperative. Even obscenity has, of late, been proclaimed as too elusive to define and therefore legitimate to disregard, not to say to applaud and employ.

The fact if not the term seems to thrive, if we are to believe Mr. Thomas Masson, who assumes it in his observation: "This being the most obscene age in the history of the world, it follows that it has more highbrows in it than any previous one." Mr. Masson, it is true, as well as a veteran editor, is an intrepid humorist, and "irony" is having a great run. Is this description of the age as accurate as its alleged consequence is doubtful—the highbrow, as a matter of fact, one would say, having disappeared? One gropes. *Can* it

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be true? Has the spirit of society in reality suffered such a phase? Has not Coleridge (as a poet) survived as unmistakably as Casanova has been exhumed? Though Swift is attracting new notice, as are Hazlitt, Fielding, Sterne, Congreve, and in general such writers as the last age is supposed to have overlooked, the present has perhaps not yet got as far as the last part of "Gulliver's Travels," called by Thackeray "filthy in word, filthy in thought, furious, raging, obscene." Its taste, as not unfairly tested by the theatre, is surely less savage than barbarous. "The boys" are "out of the trenches" these many Christmases, and now, no longer of necessity either "filthy" or "furious," are interpreting, by the primitive means of mimicry, the real days they spent in them, when profanity meant something, and material filth, being obligatory, quite naturally lent its local color to the language it infected. Nevertheless, on the stage, where it is *un*natural, this local color, though striking, cannot be warranted not to fade. However wistful in spirit, however reverently "realistic" in intention, and however excellent the context in which it may be imbedded, it will hardly establish barbarous linguistic innovations of so anti-social a savor in the language whose future familiar uses exceed those of the logging-camp and the woodshed or the sunny spots known as "behind the barn." Crudity, even barbarous, even in the interest of the "realism" whose practitioners would perhaps exclaim with Luther, "I can no other," adding by way of explanation, "In deference to truth, though I know 'gentlemen are requested not to,' my characters, not being gentlemen, must act accordingly, and to be convinced that it is their practice you must see them do it," is probably predestined to ultimate polish. Certainly if we savored the crude as little as the Greeks did the violent, a good deal of our current "drama" would take place "off stage." But less and less, as social progress proceeds, should what everybody knows to be both true and shameful be paraded for the sake not of its novelty but of the novelty of parading it. Less and less should a sympathetic market await a stale and superfluous "sincerity," stressing the loathsome and exhibiting the repulsive in the interest of theorists who cannot enjoy it (unless they take their pleasures both sadly and sadically) but desire to see it done in art if it exists in "life." And mere crudity cannot find within itself those secret sources with which pure savagery is sometimes supposed to enable "creative art" through its imaginative power to renew its viability.

Fortunately, on the other hand, the "hairy ape" though more dreadful is less prolific than the commoner simian. Mr. Kirchwey is reported as saying, "there isn't the slightest statistical evidence" that crime is on the increase, yet even if there is plenty of other evidence to the contrary, the criminal classes are too specific a problem for the spirit of society to take over from the sociologist and the legist even in the interest of democratic distinction. The comparative civilization of the civilized among us needs all its attention. "Man's nature as modified by his habits," which Burke insisted should determine legislation, if unconstrained by a socially cultivated public opinion, has no marked tendency to advance in force. His nature, having at best its unregenerate side, and habit being but second nature, the resulting modification may easily be unedifying, not to say nugatory. The latter, indeed, seems more likely in our own case. Our habits just now mainly show fluctuation, and our nature accordingly seems less modified by them or by anything than we might fear. Much of the language that clothes its self-expression with its air of having become suddenly perfunctory, suggests but a half-hearted "self" after all, betokening velleity rather than violence and "breathing out" no disquieting "threatenings and slaughter." Some of its cerebration instead of crystallizing is doubtless doomed to disintegrate. Even its comparatively solid, "too, too solid," fleshly component is lately sometimes proclaimed with less sonority. As if tired of its monotony of preponderance the sensuality that chiefly distinguishes the fiction of our day—"realism" reeking with it beyond all precedent but also beyond all basis in "reality," according to an excellent authority in both—is now and then euphemistically called sensuous, in spite of the fact that

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sensuousness is in a sense—the sense distinguishing the æsthetic from the animal—precisely what sensuality is not.

So slight a squint in the direction of decorum may indeed lack significance, as indicating less a shy survival of Victorian prudery than merely another addition to the mounting cairn of language perversions. Fiction is perhaps destined to an earlier fumigation than the social philosophy of the day, being more mobile; the extravagances of the mind with only the logic of social inexperience to guide it are less easily dislodged from the sociological book or essay, for example, in which the propaganda of sex promiscuity is imbedded. Toward the latter accomplishment more is to be expected from the gradual and indirect influences of the spirit of society, which ultimately takes most efficient charge of policing all kinds of pornographical phenomena, from the gross to the dilute, the dainty and the depraved. Mrs. Wharton's prognosis that pornography will take care of itself, though roseate, is not irreconcilable with this view. Social maturity means, as much as any other one thing, an amalgamated sex philosophy, men and women viewing their constitutional differences in an accord of reason, and possibly, in their common pursuit of so civilized a result, each sex may, like Hamlet and Laertes, find itself in possession of the other's traditional rapier, and man, gingerly and temporarily of course, assume the rôle of "refining influence" from which woman has been so strikingly diverted in the heat of a struggle in which she has successfully demonstrated her more than masculine force.

Feeling more preponderantly, if not more profoundly, endowed with greater singleness of sensibility and aflame with the zeal of the convert, her feet once set firmly in their present paths, she should be more difficult than her rival to detach from preoccupations recent enough to be still novel. These are much more, after all, an old story to the sex traditionally believed particularly open to the attractions of novelty in these matters. So that one can quite easily and without paradox foresee man becoming unprecedentedly enamoured of refinement, both drawn by ideality and driven by disgust, and really doing a good deal of proselyting among the more thoughtful of the sex which knows so well how to reconcile tenacity of purpose with adaptability of technic—besides being gifted with an open-minded taste for experiment and a disposition that, proverbially, has itself some inclination for the novel. Witness its present terror of boredom. According to the adage, *souvent femme varie*, even if *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.* The unknown, says some philosopher, has the empire over the mind of woman which habit has over that of man. At any rate the sexes are very much as they make each other, and a remarriage of sentiment with the senses should automatically achieve a more enduring social distinction than sex relations seem at present to foreshadow. Of course, by sentiment one means sentiment deep enough to rival in permanence the senses that "we have always with us."

Sentiment of this kind, indisputably a social force, is very much the business of the spirit of society. Civilization calls for grace in the inner man as urgently as for the graces of external life. For the development and guidance of this, too, in the "humanization" of man it aptly relies on this spirit, which modifies humanely the individual human being and frees him from the fetters of isolation. We ourselves can hardly cultivate it too solicitously, too generously, too generally. The spirit of politics which has, from the outset, as I have noted, served us so particularly well, and that of business, in whose inspiration we are already so rich, have long since survived the need of stimulation—both amply applying forces of concert through formal organization to the end of "standardized quantity production." And whatever the insufficiency of the most laudable individual and isolated efforts, in themselves witnessing admirable interest in the discipline of culture, standardization in these two fields can safely, perhaps, pause where it stands. "As far as the outer organization of life is concerned," says Count Keyserling, "America with its great centres is undoubtedly at the head of mankind."

Indeed, of formal "organizations" of all orders, we have in recent years, from an ideally social point of view, been afflicted with a suddenly developed surplusage.

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Their statistics are, notoriously, stupendous. They constitute one of the signs of the growing miscellaneous collectivism of the times, already challenging the independence of our individualism by the organization of the group. The group, without organic relations, however, studying seemingly both in purpose and composition essential uniformity is, if a sign, also a warning, being in large part animated by an extraordinary ardor of what to the outsider must seem purely mechanistic materialism.

The spirit of society can hardly be charged with the vagaries of the social instinct in its rudimentary form that picnic and parade in such profusion of toggery and tinsel. It is itself as far from instinct as the flower and fruit are from the seed. It can hardly favor "expression" of the perverted social impulses which lead the swaggering, shrinking soul to seek the shelter of the herd and, under the delusion of self-aggrandizement, assume in self-abdication the caricature of its comic costumery—usually unlike white samite but "mystic, wonderful." For many of the organizations flowering in these fantastic manifestations the spirit of charity, itself even more praiseworthy if less fastidious than that of society, deserves ultimately the credit; but the two must certainly co-operate more actively before the elements in question can be made to contribute much to democratic distinction. The coercive "drive," called by a victim "philanthropy by blackmail," as Mr. J. R. Sprague records in a suggestive inquiry entitled, "What Price Organization?" we may surely hope to see purged of its grossness as our "boosters" gain in social maturity, and this progress may also coincide with a "lowered percentage" of the materialism noted by Mr. Sprague. For instance, he records the circumstance that the French city of Alençon, though possessed of "eleven fully stocked and solvent bookstores," has but sixty automobiles for a population of eighteen thousand, whereas the average American city of that size would have three thousand. Certain social features which are also factors—conversation, for instance—would function on a higher level if more concerned with books than with cars.

Of course, if we are headed wrong, the less speed the better. There is more to be looked for from those who linger on the road to distinction, where the race is eminently not to the swift. The right-facing though rudimentary have less to unlearn, teachability being one of the most favorable conditions of progress. Many years ago, in Paris, I was able to perform the service of translating the French for "hot water" for a compatriot, like myself, and undoubtedly with the same cultural object in view, making the grand tour of Continental *pensions*. Later, in Rome, I had the similar opportunity of interpreting for her the words *acqua calda*. "Hot water!" she exclaimed. "Then what's this here '*l'eau chaude*'?" In this case, the process of unlearning presented no great difficulty. But instances abound of its not being needed at all. "Is there anything particular about that hill?" asked an American lady in a Cook's party at Athens of the personal conductor, indicating the Acropolis; and upon the guide's reply, another farther along in the study of the subject, pursuit of which had brought them both so far, remarked contentedly: "Well, I'm glad to see it for myself; I never could remember whether the Parthenon was on top of the Acropolis, or the Acropolis on top of the Parthenon."

That does not illustrate the highest stage of general cultivation that the spirit of society has already disseminated among us, but it is, I think, a higher one than that indicated by an incident I, myself, once witnessed in Athens, where a party of English Nonconformists, also personally conducted, had just arrived on their way back from the Holy Land. They were to change steamers at the Piræus and had a few hours to wait. The conductor brought them up to the capital for dinner, and during digestion they sat about in the palace square. Surprised at the conductor's failure to conduct, I asked him why he didn't take them up on the Acropolis. "I tried to," he replied, "but they said they'd seen ruins enough." They would have been more at home, no doubt, in Tennessee, a home, by the way, of modern English colonizing experiment. They could have talked with the Tennesseeans about Palestine. The English have their own products of individualism, and

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these would have understood as well, perhaps, as many of ourselves the project in more recent times, frustrated by death, of one of our own eloquent party-leaders to lead thither a large party of his admirers and, following literally in the footsteps of the Saviour of Mankind, make addresses to them at the principal points of interest, no doubt culminating on Calvary—with what to many of his countrymen, possessed of maturer, not necessarily metropolitan, standards, would have proved what the French call *un vrai calvaire* to read about. Certainly, to those represented by one of them who, in some ecclesiastical discussion, on being accused of not being fundamentally a Christian, observed that he had sometimes entertained doubts on that point himself, but never any of being a churchman.

The attitude thus whimsically proclaimed is less sensational than it sounds. Much in our civilization is designed to provoke it by mere reaction. The proportion of cranks and crazes—political, religious, ritual, or æsthetic—in any community of course varies inversely as the degree of the community's sense of conformity. And it is this definitely civilizing sense which the diffusion of general intelligence with mutual respect tends to develop and through which it operates. Lacking it, the individual contributes nothing to the herd of which the animal instinct of imitation makes him a constituent; which is what Mr. Chesterton must mean in calling individualism the reverse of individuality. At present, as is natural in a period of disintegration, our social genius certainly shows no great activity in this respect. It is equally unenterprising in directing the tendencies it might foster and in controlling those it might correct. It is, accordingly, more at home with the trifles which mark tendencies than with the tendencies themselves —more its legitimate concern. Trifles it deals with by the trifling that comes easiest to the trivial, and that rewards its efforts with the most immediate response. It certainly allies itself absurdly with the ephemeral and the superficial, on occasion, and in the way of modifying men's habits begins with the circumference instead of starting at the centre, imposing the fashions that are essentially fads, rather than inculcating principles of taste. Though never less lasting, the mode was never more despotic. All sorts of insignificant inhibitions are thus tyrannously imposed at the same time that individual eccentricities escape notice, a fact needlessly mortifying to the individual concerned as well as impeding the advance of social maturity.

On the other hand, experience shows that eccentricity extravagant enough inevitably to attract attention cannot be trusted to consider, as of course in fairness it should, whether it is likely to repay it, and calls loudly for enlightenment by public opinion. There is a certain exhilaration, no doubt, in the "release" of outdoor hatlessness, originating with the hatless parade of the single individual which used to secure a "write-up" in the papers, now become a general metropolitan mode—first popularized by the inveterately modish college boy, and now rather charmingly accenting the community spirit in those of the professorate for whom it is not "alas, too late!" On "the avenue" the luxuriant tangle of tresses borne aloft by the head for the frolic winds to toy with, as erst they blew through whiskers, often makes the observer regret the absence of the hat. But the inertness of public opinion evinced in its tolerance is plainly preferable to the violence with which the "herd" hoodlum enforces its arbitrary edicts in the matter of wearing hats before or beyond the calendar limit fixed by it for assuming or discarding them. And in the case of adequate genius this tolerance often becomes chivalry. George Francis Train's rigorous self-segregation was always respected, and Mark Twain's immutable white flannels—unlike his spontaneity, as we are now told—were never suppressed. Phenomena of this sort, more characteristic of our comparatively traditionless society than of others, really do indicate on our part a desultory discovery, so to say, of the long-looked for secret of perpetual youth—in the sense at least of youthfulness—the secret for which, however, a maturing society may easily cease to have much real use "ere," as Byron laments, "youth itself be past."

Forces of concert, it is true, may conceivably tend also, the "herd" being al-

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ways at hand, to limit the production and hamper the development of individual genius, though commonly contemporary genius may be trusted to look out for itself—or to be looked out for by an age uncommonly on the lookout for it. But for curtailing the production and development of those who have a genius for what has been called "the delight of pure oppugnation," the synthetic forces certainly deserve the thanks of the civilization which prizes distinction. Incidentally, where these forces are themselves diverted to the end of producing eccentric types—as in the various forms of anti-social socialism from Brook Farm to Greenwich Village—they still evince their inherent power, malefic only when its scope is narrow and its field, like a well-known tonic, "peculiar to itself."

On any scale adequate to illustrate the formations and march of civilization, it is not its guerilla contingents any more than its camp-followers that count in its progress. And it is the spirit of society which creates, differentiates, organizes, develops and enthrones public opinion, which, on the one hand, diversifies its original uniformity into fitting survivals and, on the other, through co-operative intelligence, welds its varieties of idiosyncrasy into an instrument of binding force and acknowledged power. It was early discovered that it was not good for man to live alone. Neither was he combined with his fellow men on the principle of mere aggregation. Of him and them a third unit, equally intrinsic, equally definite, was engendered which for "the uses of this world," if not for "Divine, Everlasting Night with her Silences and Star Diadems," has been very likely the most important as well as the most imperious of the triad—the organic spirit, namely, of its own elastic combination, the spirit of society. With all our worship of public opinion have we ever made any particular obeisance to this our social genius which, nevertheless, so far as pertinent to its own sphere, inspires and moulds, arms and directs public opinion, and enables it to curb, to counteract, and to transform the individualism of extravagance, of eccentricity, and, above all, of levity?

[Another article, "Humor and Sentiment," by Mr. Brownell, will appear in an early number.]

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# A Statue of Washington, in the North

BY NANCY BYRD TURNER

VALIANT he rides, here where the spring comes slow—
Keen etched against our gusty April gray,
East wind at stalwart shoulder, bitter spray
Of sea-wrought mist on rein and saddle-bow;
And while the old intrepid hoofbeats go
Along the listening ages, if the face,
Weary with wars—be set a little space
Southwestward, fain and wistful, even so. . . .

That way lies boyhood. Through a scented rain
Of cherryblooms at dusk the whippoorwills
Are haling truants from the Stafford hills,
And hares go romping down an old red lane,
And minnows fleck the Rappahannock tide
With taunting silver tails. Ride, soldier, ride!

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# Jimmie Goes to Sunday-School

BY CHARLES HAVEN MYERS

JIMMIE possesses no extraordinary gifts or talents. He has frisked through eleven shining summers without displaying a predilection for serious inquiry. His teachers have never associated him with precocity, nor does his I. Q. place him in either the supernormal or the subnormal classification. His father is self-made, "whittled out with his own jack-knife." His mother—a Wellesley graduate—sacrificed a career for a home. The above is precautionary preface lest the reader, unwarned, draw the summary conclusion that Jimmie is unusual.

Jimmie goes to Sunday-school. In fact, he has been a punctual and regular attendant since his fourth year when he entered the kindergarten of Bolton Square Church, a fairly representative Protestant institution. The last decade has witnessed an evolution in the system of lessons in Bolton Square. First, the old Berean lessons were scrapped for graded lessons. Then two years ago the graded lessons were regarded by the supervising committee as unsatisfactory, resulting in the adoption of a text-book system. Forthwith parents were asked to purchase books for their children. The change was successfully defended on grounds of thoroughness and continuity in the lessons. A new director of religious education—Phineas Markham—was employed and the differentiating title of church-school was adopted. Bolton Square suddenly achieved a reputation. It was about this time that Jimmie Ryder overheard Judge Knowlton remark to his father: "That chap Markham certainly knows his berries. At last we seem to be acquiring sense about teaching Sunday-school lessons. The children are actually learning something about the Bible." Jimmie's conclusion was that if Judge Knowlton said it, it must be so. But just what and how much he had learned he could nct write down upon paper. But anyway, he thought, Bolton Square had the best scout troop and a winning ball-team. There floated through his immature brain a vague idea that Bolton Square church-school was an important institution.

This year the curriculum—all properly diagramed in approved fashion—announced in bold letters that Jimmie and other boys of his age would study "The Heroes of Israel." Upon examining the new text-book, Jimmie's dad had a brainstorm of furious proportions. What he discovered was a collection of graceless patriarchs whose misdeeds far outweighed their noble qualities. He read the book through to the last chapter and then fumed! He had expected to find a lot of worthies with stories of commendable adventure. What he did find, as he read the appended Scriptural references chapter by chapter, was a veritable rogues' gallery of Israelitish petty-kings, freebooters, bushrangers, smugglers, pious thimble-riggers, and plunderers. Of course, from the text that Jimmie was to use, the grosser passages, those unfit for reading aloud in the living-room, had been neatly expurgated. Then there were sugar-coated editorial comments apologizing for moral lapses of the heroes, interlarded with a generous amount of Christian admonition! But Ryder was not convinced that these half-mythical brigands should be held up before Jimmie as illustrious examples of moral leadership. Dad, "all het up," jumped into his car and drove over to the home of the director of religious education. He handed the text-book to Markham with the question that came like an explosion.

"Do you think this book contains the proper lessons to be taught to our boys?" Markham was nonplussed. Most parents seemed to care little about what was taught on Sunday. He could not understand Ryder's agitation.

"Why, it's the best text we can find on Old Testament heroes, Mr. Ryder." Mr. Ryder was ready with his come-back.



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"What's the big idea, anyway, of this hero-stuff?" By this time Markham had arranged his ideas. He launched into a discussion of adolescent psychology. It was a bit academic and muddy. Ryder couldn't "follow through" on all the points. But he had gained respect for Markham, aware that he had done a great deal for the boys. He listened patiently. He was being told that religious psychologists had discovered through much research in the "human laboratory" that the early years of a boy's life made up the "hero-worshipping period." "Yes, Markham, I'll admit some of that but"—Markham was now well launched on his pet subject and could not be checked. He continued.

"We see the boy at this period idealizing the strong man, the brave man, the skilful man. Why, Mr. Ryder, James has his lariat and his boxing-gloves, his canoe and snow-shoes. These are only symbols of his ideals." Ryder nodded. "At this period the boy is thrilled by the clang of the fire-truck, or the sight of the speeding locomotive. He reads pirate tales and, if unguided, cheap detective stories." Here Ryder stopped Markham with a real upper-cut.

"Believe me, Markham! My boy will get racy reading this winter if you use that text-book. I would rather he'd sneak out into the garage with a copy of 'The Demon of the Danube' or 'Forty Buckets of Blood,' knowing that it's all fake, than to read about these unconscionable scoundrels, imagining that God Almighty directed the participants from the celestial side-lines." But Markham had his speech as well learned as a book-agent. He had to go through to the end. Ryder listened.

"This is the age when the boy looks wistfully at pictures of Babe Ruth and Red Grange, lives in a dream world of adventure, and selects as his favorite movies the exciting 'Western' pictures. Now! We have carefully selected the Old Testament heroes as the most interesting characters for this period of a boy's life."

"But," Ryder interjected, "they're not moral; they're not even decent. They lie, they kill, they plunder, they take whatever they see 'in the name of the Lord,' they cheat—I think, Markham, pardon me if I seem sacrilegious—I think they're a rummy lot of heroes."

"But they are all a part of the early period of Hebrew history that is so necessary to understand if the New Testament is ever to mean anything."

"Let them stay where they belong with all the rest of the doers of dark deeds. I don't care whether my boy ever learns about them or not. He'll find out how crooked they are, according to our standards, soon enough." So the talk continued, battle dore and shuttle cock, for half an hour. At last Ryder, having gotten this off his chest, rose to go. He had been convinced of nothing, rather more confirmed in his opinion. But he had registered his protest. Markham gave him a parting assurance as he laid his hand on his arm: "Have no fear, Mr. Ryder, about James being misled. Jack Martin, the principal of Eastbourne School, is to teach this subject this winter and he will make these lessons, with applications from modern life, so thrilling that he'll have the boys sitting on the edge of the seats. James will lose a lot if he should drop out."

"Well, we'll see." And with a hurried "good-night" Ryder drove home slowly. As he entered the living-room, Mrs. Ryder was reading. "Mary, where is that volume of Carlyle that we read together the first year we were married? Don't you remember? The one about heroes." His wife looked up—"'Heroes and Hero Worship'? Why it's over there in the bookcase in the sun-room." John Ryder was soon lost in Carlyle and at last came to the sentence he himself had marked and forgotten. Perhaps, after all, it was his subconscious self that had been talking to Markham. Here it was. "And what therefore is loyalty proper, the life-breath of all society, but an effluence of hero-worship, submissive admiration for the truly great?—["truly great" had been underscored]. Society is founded on hero-worship." Ryder dropped his cigar in the ash-tray and spoke aloud for the first time in half an hour. "Just what I thought! Hero-worship belongs to every age of life. It is no more the property of the boy than wearing pants is. It is a part of life."

John and Mary Ryder spent the rest of the evening dissecting the text-book on Israel's heroes and discussing what was

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best for James Ryder; whether it was fair to teach any boy that God inspired men to do wrong that good might come, and whether a wrong ethical twist in the plastic period might not do irreparable damage, or whether boys would draw sensible and right conclusions after all. John Ryder and his wife went to bed that night realizing that the short hour that children spend at Sunday-school was far greater in its influence than they had surmised.

Was not this rather hard-boiled business man doing a bit of sound reasoning? Should we not rightfully protest against confining hero-worship to one brief period of a boy's life? Is a young man of twenty any less a hero-worshipper than his younger brother of eight? All of us are hero-worshippers. And the rotogravure section of the Sunday supplement brings photographic reproductions of the present-day heroes and heroines—explorers, chemists, sailors, labor-leaders, miners, engineers, physicians, scientists, orators—a study in brown of an amazing array of those who have achieved something distinctive. Next week we shall have another crowd. There is no end to the supply. It is perennially flowing—this stream of human accomplishment of a high order. Amundsen, Ellsworth, Byrd, Rogers Hornsby, Gertrude Ederle, Tyrus Cobb; Fosdick, Darrow; Mussolini, Baldwin; Einstein, Millikan, Edison; Ford—but why pile up the names?

No—there is no age-limit for this human phenomenon. It is truly the spur of effort. Hero-worship is the solace to the struggling will for expression. It is the spirit that keeps society from somnolence and inertia. Ryder had stumbled upon a very vital problem. He was striking out, half-blindly, in defense of his boy. He was unable to analyze it all clearly, knowing that tradition and custom were set against him and half-hoping that, after all, James would come out with enough discrimination to distinguish the good from the bad. But he was not sure of it. Herein is found the crux of all Biblical instruction of youth. Let us face the question fairly and frankly. How and when shall we teach the legendary and mythical tales of the Old Testament? The random conclusion is that they shall be taught at the age when the boys and girls are learning about Hercules and Mercury, Atlas, Vulcan, and Odin. But we have completely overlooked one vital difference between the "hero-tales" of the Old Testament and the stories of classic mythology. The child approaches the Bible with a subconscious feeling that whatever comes from the "Sacred Book" is divine truth and his immature mind throws a certain mystical sanctity about it. The Sunday-school teacher supplies the necessary emotional appeal to make the tragedy complete. Consequently, to the average child the tales of Greece and Rome are legends, the folk-lore of the Old Testament is religious truth. The experience of the youth of Edgar Lee Masters is not unlike that of many American boys, not only in the past but in this glorious present. "Such being the nature of my mind, I looked upon the tales of wonder in the Bible as I did on the myths of Greece, but with the difference that while I saw beauty and significance in the myths I saw mostly brutality and absurdity in the tales, and that valuation was sharpened by the fact that tales are thrust upon youths as divine utterances." *

Herein lies the source of a colossal outrage perpetrated year after year—the superstitious reverence for anything and everything contained in Holy Scriptures. The Sunday-school teacher often lacks ethical discrimination and is, perhaps, completely ignorant of the results of historical criticism and the evolution of religious ideas. Facing this dilemma the teacher resorts to equivocation and subterfuge or finds himself violating the traditions that linger in the stuffy atmosphere of the Sunday-school room. When the teacher is confronted with a lesson from Kings, for example, that bears not the remotest relation to social conditions of to-day, possibly reeking with unseemly, primitive practices, he will have a tendency to employ a familiar but inexcusable method. He will seize upon some one sentence that seems to contain a lurking suggestion of truth, twist it from its context and with pietistic language make a practical accommodation of it. This, supposedly, redeems the chapter. The text has become a pretext. But this method, practised every Sunday by misguided teachers, is a palpable imposition

* "In Search of a Better Religion," *McNaught's Monthly*, June, 1926.

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if not a direct insult to the intelligence of the pupil. It is a fair shot that of the 17,510,830 boys and girls enrolled in American Sunday-schools a goodly share receive this kind of Scriptural instruction every week.

Now let us return to Jimmie. Mr. and Mrs. Ryder decide to let Jimmie continue with his class. Jack Martin was red-blooded, sane, and, withal, a boy-lover. Surely Jimmie would not go far astray under such tutelage. But, alas, Jack Martin found this galaxy of heroes a motley crowd. He had a desperate time finding virtues worthy of emulation.

Jimmie had been taught in the kindergarten that "God is love." The kindergarten age is beautiful. Then, too, the teachings of Jesus were fascinating. But on the very first Sunday with the new text-book they had the story of the Flood. Jimmie shuddered (just a little shudder, for it was so long ago and it seemed a little unreal), when Martin described how God had sent the flood and wiped out all the people on the earth, saving only eight people. He couldn't reconcile, in his small mind, this story with Jesus saying that "we should love our enemies." He asked his mother: "If God is love how could he get so angry as to want to kill the people he had made?" Dick Ballentine was one year older than Jimmie. He asked Mr. Martin if Noah didn't get drunk when he was six hundred years old. Dick said his father said so. Dick's father was called an agnostic. Mr. Martin said laughingly "he did, but that was long before prohibition." But Jimmie was considerably upset. His hero had tumbled from his pedestal. It was funny that God should choose Noah as his special pet when he knew he would get drunk. That night Jimmie lay awake, thinking about it and trying to straighten it out in his young mind. He told his mother next morning that he "dreamed of the ark floating about on a sea of red wine, that Noah was drunk and all the animals were drunk too, and that the giraffe and the zebra did a Charleston on the upper deck of the ark and the monkeys and baboons made up the orchestra." Leaving Freud aside, have we fully evaluated the dreams of our children?

There were three lessons about Abraham. Jimmie liked these stories about the long trek out of Ur of the Chaldees, and Mr. Martin told them so many things about the caravans and the moon-gods and how courageous Abraham had been to cut loose and follow the voice of God. In reality Martin did a dexterous piece of elimination and omitted the chapter readings which he had been assigning for home-study. We defend Martin. One needs only to read these tales to appreciate their unfitness in teaching them to boys. Abraham is a mercenary, self-aggrandizing sheik who puts into the mouth of God words conveniently suited to his super-ego. Though the Canaanites occupy the country God says to him: "I give this land to your descendants." This man Abraham did not hesitate to practise deception. His ethical code did not scruple to expose his wife to the peril of being seduced if thereby he could save his own skin. Here is the way he put it up to Sarah:

"Come, I know you are a handsome-looking woman; when the Egyptians see you they will say: 'This is his wife' and they will kill me, and let you live. Do say that you are my sister, that I may be kindly treated for your sake and that my life may be spared on your account." *

Again, later, Abraham tries the "sister-act" on Abimelek—the King of Gerar. When Abimelek discovers the deception, Abraham falls back upon a clever, legal equivocation saying: "She is my sister, really. A daughter of my father but not of my mother." * (Marrying half-sisters was permissible.)

Abraham practised the barbaric necromancy of that period. On one occasion he cut into pieces a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old she-goat, a three-year-old ram, and placed a turtle-dove and a young pigeon beside the pieces of fresh meat. After the sheik had fallen into a trance beside this gruesome covenant the desired effect was produced. The fire and flaming torch passed between the pieces and he heard the Eternal say to him that all the land was his, with the inhabitants thereof, Kenites, Hittites, Jebusites, and all the rest of the -ites. Martin considered long whether he would tell this story. The boys had heard of negro voodooism and knew the magic of the words "eerie, orie, ickory, ann." But here was a piece

* Doctor Moffatt's translation.

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of mumbo-jumbo that would stretch even the imagination of boys who had heard of the thaumaturgic effect of swinging a black cat by the tail, three times round the head and tossing it into the graveyard at midnight. So that was omitted.

Martin did a bit of clever juggling that winter in trying to avoid violation of a boy's sense of right in the story of Abraham's attempted sacrifice of Isaac and his utter lack of compunction in driving his concubine slave, Hagar, and her child into the desert to starve. It was a desperately trying time for Martin.

Let us take an impartial, disinterested look at the subject-matter from which this high-school teacher was required to build inspiring examples of moral heroism. There is Isaac who imitates his father and introduces his wife, Rebecca, as his sister when travelling without passports. Jacob falls in love with Rachel, she of the beautiful eyes, and agrees to work for Laban seven years. At the end of this period of service his reward was to be the hand of Rachel. It was a clean-cut bargain. When the time was up and the marriage banquet was over, Laban hands to Jacob not Rachel—but blear-eyed Leah. Then another seven-year period of work as husbandman; for had not Laban given a good alibi: "It is not the custom in our country to marry the younger daughter before the older." But during this seven-year period Jacob nourishes a grudge. He retaliates. By a clever stock-breeder's trick he manages to get the larger part of Laban's flocks and herds into his own corral and when Rachel is his at last, they depart to set up housekeeping on their own. Rachel steals the house-gods. Their departure, it seems, was somewhat hurried and unceremonious. Laban, furious, mounts his sport-model camel and takes after the elopers. When he demands the house-gods Jacob pleads innocence. (It was Rachel's private theft.) When Laban comes to Rachel seated serenely on her dromedary with her skirts covering the Lares, she makes a neat little speech and begs her father to excuse her for not rising, feigning illness. It is all a sorry mess of chicanery, lying, stealing, and deception, this story, culminating in the murder of the clan of Hamor in Shechem, as brazen and inexcusable an atrocity as may be found in history. After this outrage God blesses Jacob and gives him a new name—Israel. Thus a glorious race—with a genius for religious expression—has a most inglorious beginning.

Then comes the *lex talionis* of the Mosaic period. We ask the youth of the twentieth century to make obeisance before the ethical codes of forty centuries ago—"an eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth; a life for a life." And we shall continue our barbarism of war, and capital punishment just so long as we teach each rising generation that "getting even" has divine sanction in the Scriptures, and therefore should undergird the whole fabric of our social institutions.

Joshua—Moses's successor—conquers and kills the Canaanitish kings in swift succession. Joshua had gotten God's whisper too—"Whatever eye rests upon, take it. It is a goodly land, flowing with milk and honey. I will be with you. Fear not. Be strong." With no other justification than that of Prussia in raping Belgium—"a military necessity"—Joshua conquers Canaan to which he is not more entitled than the United States is entitled to Canada. Thus, this ordinary free-booter with the morals of a Mexican renegade, piously telling his soldiers on the eve of battle: "Consecrate yourselves, to-morrow God will work wonders for you," is to be held up as an example of lusty, stalwart heroism before the young manhood of America. Here is a war-book with twenty-four chapters of dark deeds and slaughterings which we of the twentieth century still feel it incumbent to teach as the Word of God.

Follows the book of Judges with twenty-one chapters reeking with cruelty, manslaughter, assassination, incest, treachery, and lawlessness. (Here the editors made a judicious selection of one hero—Gideon.) We commend the Hebrews for prohibiting their young men from reading parts of the Scriptures until they were twenty-one.

There is also that valiant soul—Samson. How shall we account for him? Yes, the text-book reads: "Samson was a promised child, set apart from his birth to the Lord." Then in succession follow the brave deeds of this swaggering braggart, his encounter with the lion, his silly riddles, his atrocities, tying firebrands to the

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foxes' tails, his wonderful feats with an ass's jaw-bone, the carrying off of the gates of Gaza (is that the source of village pranks on Hallowe'en?) and his final, immolating vengeance. Rollickingly rough stories—but so are "Gulliver's Travels" and "Tales by Baron Munchausen." Has Milton, the Puritan, glorified this brutal man overmuch? Why hold him up as a hero for our boys? Any one of a hundred men of the prize-ring are better in morals and manners than this giant boasting of his flexed biceps and his long hair.

The book of Esther is a tale of the intrigue and plot of an Oriental court. Whatever it may hold for the Jewish race it has little value for the average reader. There is in it nothing elevating or inspiring. Yet it has been played up in Sunday-school pageants *ad nauseam*.

David—"the sweet singer of Israel"—David the slayer of Goliath, David the friend of Jonathan, cannot well be separated from David the libertine. This royal desperado romps through the greater part of fifty chapters of the books of Samuel, displaying bad manners, atrocious ethical standards and very few noble qualities. Pretending insanity he thumps on doors and foams at the mouth in order to save recognition by Achish; nothing very lofty about this boy's hero. At the cave of Adullam he gathers all the debtors, malcontents, and outlaws into a clan for reprisal—about four hundred—and starts out on his career as a highwayman. He carries on a continuous feud with Saul. He calls down a curse on Joab: "May Joab's house never lack some one with a running issue, or some leper, or some effeminate creature, or a murdered victim, or a poverty-stricken waif." * He does a dervish dance before the ark of the covenant. As prosperity comes to his realm he multiplies the number of his wives and concubines. To this man God says: "I will make you famous like the great men upon earth." He finds his "place in the sun." And at this period of his spiritual and political ascendancy he commits one of his vilest deeds. He places Uriah among the shock troops in battle where Uriah is slain in order to secure his wife, Bathsheba. He becomes a lecherous brigand ruling over a kingdom not larger than a fair-sized county in Ohio.

* Doctor Moffatt's translation.

Martin had done his best with these tales of primitive and half-barbaric men. He had played the spot-light upon their few virtues hoping to hide the vicious characteristics in the deep shadows. But his conscience had smitten him. He felt, being an honest soul, that he had violated his own integrity and had not played the game square. He had defended principles of conduct that would not have been tolerated in the mediæval period. The class finished the course just before Easter. One Sunday morning he met Markham on the church steps. Markham greeted him with his accustomed cheerfulness.

"Well, how's the class of boys coming on?" Martin was buttoning his raincoat. At each button a different reply came to his mind. Finally he reached the top button and then decided to be brutally frank.

"See here, Mr. Markham, I agreed last fall to take this class in "Heroes of Israel" and I've stayed through to the end. I'm not a quitter. But so far as that book is concerned—never again." He straightened himself to his full stature and repeated it. "Never again!"

"Not well edited?" Markham queried.

"Edited! No, the editors have done a good acrobatic stunt. But these characters are unfit to hold before our boys. Positively, Markham, if they were living to-day there isn't one of them that could escape State's prison."

"Perhaps you're right, Martin. John Ryder made a protest last fall and threatened to take his boy out of the class. He let James stay only because you were to teach the class. Certainly it ought to be considered seriously."

"Well, I'm through," said Martin as he ducked into the rain. And Markham shouted after him: "Thanks for your frankness, Martin."

And now what about Jimmie? Alas, no one just knows. We have intelligence tests but not morality tests. There is, moreover, no way of measuring the influence of such experiences upon the impressionable spirit of the boy. If we say, in our mature and hardened sophistication, that such lessons make no impression, then conversely the same may be said of all moral instruction and the whole system represented by the Sunday-school represents wasted energy. Admitting

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that morality is only taught in practice we must put ourselves in Jimmie's shoes to understand the mental confusion and disillusionment that must have disturbed his young soul. It is palpably unfair. The whole error arises from a wrong objective—the whole Bible must be taught. The true objective would be the symmetrical moulding of the moral life of the child. Indeed, have we not underestimated the influence of the Old Testament in history? War, rapine, polygamy, territorial aggrandizement—all have found their defense in the ethics of the Old Testament. Is it not time that we relegate these indefensible principles of conduct to the limbo of the primitive marge where they belong?

We need a shorter Bible for children. If the folk-lore of Genesis is taught, it must be taught as folk-lore, not as fact. Most of the Levitical and Deuteronomic codes have little value except to the student of early Hebrew life and times. Such books as Kings, Samuel, Chronicles, and The Acts of the Apostles should be taught in story form, well edited. We must get away from the traditional notion that we must teach *all* the Bible. It is not a book but, as the name implies (Biblia), it is a library. We would not think of imposing Sartor Resartus or Religio Medici upon a boy or girl of ten years. It is quite as impossible to expect children to comprehend the significance of the Apocalypse of John, or Ezekiel, or The Epistle to the Hebrews —books that have little spiritual significance, however replete in symbolic figures. Very few teachers are capable of explaining these books to mature minds. Let the shorter Bible be a compilation of some of the proverbs, the decalogue, a few of the Psalms, the Sermon on the Mount, the parables of Jesus and some of the significant chapters from the Pauline Epistles. The historical background of the Jews need not be taught until the high-school period.

If we are to teach the child about heroes, let us take modern heroes, and inspire them with the idea of service. John Howard, Abraham Lincoln, Florence Nightingale, Benjamin Franklin, and the great contemporaries who are liberating society from superstition and error. If we want to include Jewish heroes we need not go far afield. The late Oscar Straus and Doctor Simon Flexner are illustrious examples—"helpers and friends of mankind."

We require of Sunday-school teachers an insuperable task. To teach lessons in the average curriculum requires an ingenuity and pedagogic skill well beyond the capacity of the instructor.

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# The Distance to Casper

BY J. HYATT DOWNING
Author of "Closed Roads"

ILLUSTRATIONS BY EDWARD HOPPER

WE were driving to Casper in a smother of biting, blinding snow. The plucky little team plunged, heads down, into the drifts, snorting. The wind had increased to a gale and the snow, fine and hard, cut the skin like sand. Our teamster was profanely speculating as to the distance we still had to travel. Suddenly, beside the half-obliterated trail loomed the figure of a man, his sheepskin coat-collar turned up against the icy blast, a collie dog crouched at his feet. "Say, Old Timer," yelled the teamster, striving to lift his voice above the noise of the wind, "how far is it to Casper?"

The man turned to us slowly. There was a familiar line about the lean, weathered face. "Casper?" he asked, with a smile which I thought was strangely ironic and bitter, "I think I can tell you exactly."



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But I had best begin this story where O. Henry said all short stories should start—at the beginning.

High up in the Wind Rivers Steve and I sat. Below lay the valley, tawny and warm, asleep in the rich sunlight of a July afternoon. Through it wound Wind River, shrunk by distance to a shining thread. The air was still. A chipmunk, dashing with great secrecy from protecting rock to shrub, started tiny particles of gravel which sent up dry little spurts of sound. A haze hung over the distant peaks. I was conscious of a desire to lie at full length on that sun-drenched mountainside and bask, with sensuous languor, in the yellow warmth. Steve rolled a brown-paper cigarette, lighted it, and spun the match off between thumb and forefinger with a little whirring noise. "Yu say she's comin', sure 'nuff?" he asked. I thought there was anxiety in his voice. I nodded. A long interval passed. Then: "It ain't right."

"There doesn't seem to be anything you and I can do about it, Steve. She's Cockran's sister, you know."

"Her comin' into a man's camp, this way," he went on, ignoring my remark. "It'll sure upset the cook. Won't old Antone be sore, though? Sore as hell." Antone was our cook, German, speaking very broken English, and almost none at all when angry, which was often. He and Steve were great friends. "Here we are, gettin' along in lovin' accord, yu might say," Steve resumed bitterly. "Fightin' crabs and playin' poker in the evenings. Yu got any pants without holes in 'em?"

I assured him that I had. I always managed to keep a change of clothes. I didn't need a woman in camp to remind me that I was a sight unfit for decent human association. Some people did. "That's right, professor. You're neat. Almost prissy. I wonder a lot how come yu ever got into this rough, uncouth business of engineering." He was trying to be as insulting as possible, I realized. Steve had, not long since, graduated from a southwestern university, and his greatest concern seemed to be to forget that important fact. His pet aversion was college professors—I suspected many conditions during his scholastic career—and he never called me "professor" unless there was a jibe behind it.

My glance wandered down the lush, green floor of the valley. Dimly, in the distance, a white speck was crawling. "What's that, Steve?" I asked, pointing.

"Camp mover for the Cousin Jack sheep-herder. Yu reckon *any* white man would herd sheep?"

"Oh, yes. In this country, often. Many of the mare English remittance-men, like this one, I expect."

"Down where I come from we leave that to the greasers."

Presently the sheep themselves could be distinguished, a crawling mass against the dull gray-green of the sage. Borne on a vagrant current of air, came the thin, faint tinkle of bells. "There's the woollies, now," said Steve. "Damn sheep."

"You're Southwest, Steve," I replied. "You can't get over old hatreds. Education should have done more for you. It's a definite fault."

"They sure didn't teach me to love sheep where I went to school nor people mixed up with 'em." His attention became fixed on a slowly moving white cloud of dust, following the course of the river. It grew steadily larger. "Yu can get out your Sunday pants, professor. That's the Casper stage and here comes trouble."

## II

SHE greeted us all with a bright, inclusive nod. Her abundant, corn-colored hair gleamed brightly in the yellow lamplight. She was alluringly soft, exquisitely feminine. Her voice, when she spoke, dropped upon our ears, attuned to harsh speech, in soft little petals of sound. The men were constrained; Steve elaborately polite. "Would you *kindly* pass the syrup? May I *trouble* you for a biscuit?" After a while he put his mouth close to my ear and whispered hoarsely: "Trouble, sure as hell." Antone moved about with a sort of gloomy dignity and muttered to himself behind his stove.

The meal finished, we foregathered in the bull tent. There was an excited delving into bags for clean clothes amid derisive comments from Steve. A buzz of excited talk arose from the younger members of the party, chain boys and stake artists just out of school. Wasn't she

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*From a drawing by Edward Hopper.*

At the piano was a man bent forward as in a listening attitude, his hands outspread upon the keyboard.
—Page 164.



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pretty? Who'd have thought old dough-face Cockran had a sister like that! (Cockran, the chief, lived apart in the office tent. Another had been put up for his sister.) Had any one lamped the fraternity pin she was wearing? That was always the way—the dolls grabbed off by some lucky stiff. The sad ones lasted forever. Antone came in to borrow tobacco. Steve assailed him viciously. One thing was certain; Antone would have to put up some honest-to-God grub. Served the old gut robber right. He, Steve, was personally glad of it. He hoped the young woman would demand breakfast at ten every morning and insist on napkins. They beamed upon each other affectionately. Antone was dressed for a call, having donned a shiny Prince Albert coat over his collarless shirt. Steve inquired, with elaborate concern, if he couldn't lend him a cravat since he was obviously about to call on Mrs. Kenston at the road ranch. Antone was *not* calling on Mrs. Kenston. He was going to the road ranch, yes. But the English sheep-herder was there. He was very drunk, the stage-driver had informed him, but was playing the piano beautifully. Presently the three of us walked through the starlit night in the direction of the Kenston road ranch. The place was operated by Mrs. Kenston, whose husband had long since departed, having toasted his guests too long and ardently. She was a large, generous-hearted woman, a mother to more than one luckless adventurer into that land of mountain and sage.

There was, it seemed, an unnatural air of quiet in the barroom when we arrived. Old Uncle Billy, a superannuated combination of vassal and body-guard to Mrs. Kenston, presided there with a dignity he conceived to be appropriate to a high calling. He was quite alone. He and Antone glared at each other. Antone had a trick of rapping imperiously upon the bar with a coin when he desired drink. Uncle Billy vastly resented this. He sniffed at Antone and jerked his head with a waspish motion, when I inquired as to the Sabbatical calm, in the direction of an open door. And, simultaneously, came the deep, rich chords of a piano, struck with an authoritative hand. We crowded through a narrow doorway into a room lined with men. They all sat in tense attitudes of absorbed interest. At the piano was a man bent forward as in a listening attitude, his hands outspread upon the keyboard. He wore a soiled, sheep-lined coat and corduroys tucked into laced half-boots. His hands were unclean and cracked by weather; yet I observed that the fingers were long and tapering. Then he began to play.

I do not know if all the music he played for us has ever been written. Probably not. None but those who have walked with tragedy as a daily portion of their lives could have played as he did. He weaved slowly backward and forward upon the bench and the music that fell from his fingers sounded, it seemed to me, the ineffable sadness of human existence. The men—herders, stage-drivers, miners from the Big Horns—sat in attitudes of rigid immobility. And, released by music, the faces mirrored for a moment the starved tenderness that lived in their hearts. Old Antone, his hands opening and closing with nervous intensity, listened with his music-loving German soul in his eyes. But nothing the stranger played had I ever heard before with the exception of one old piece that I had heard long years ago at home: "Oh, Willie, We Have Missed You." He put tears into it and the heart-break of yearning.

Suddenly the music ceased and the player rose abruptly from the piano. I got a quick look at his face. It was a long face, drained of all color (as liquor acts with some men) and ploughed and furrowed by life. There was still the high-bridged nose, wide-set eyes under jutting brows, and the thin, straight line of lips. It was clear that he was quite drunk, for he weaved uncertainly upon his legs when he started from the room. As he passed me he paused and gazed at some one on my left with such an expression on his face and in his eyes as must come to one who looks again upon a thing he has believed vanished from the world. I turned quickly and there, standing in the doorway which opened into another room, were Mrs. Kenston and Cockran's sister. It was the latter who was the object of the sheep-herder's wondering regard. She seemed strangely remote and the exquisite grace of her small body was accentuated in that rough room of logs, unadorned except for the battered grand. A

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little smile of amused incredulity was upon her lips and I, still under the spell of magic of the man's playing, felt vaguely resentful. She turned, then, with a little laugh, to Mrs. Kenston. "Really, one doesn't look for drama in the desert. So diverting. Now, if I may have the eggs, Mrs. Kenston"—with that they turned back into the room.

## III

It was Steve who next brought us news of the sheep-herder. We had seen him each day, of course, a dim, remote figure, standing silently alone upon a sage-clad hill. His wagon, one of those marvels in utilization of every inch of space, gave forth each morning a plume of white smoke as the sheep-herder cooked his breakfast. It soon became a natural part of the drab color scheme of the land. We recognized him each day as we went on the "line" much as we recognized a familiar rock or juniper and with as little comment. He was simply a herder and as such to be regarded, if at all, in silence. Even the bartenders in Casper accepted their money across the polished mahogany without the warming smile and good-natured profanity which the miners and punchers, gentry of the land, accepted as their due. Their lumbering antics, their prodigal debauchery, were tolerated with thin contempt as long as their cash lasted. Then, without ceremony, they were thrown into the street.

A difficult piece of triangulation held the transitman and me in the office tent longer after the other members of the party had retired to their usual game of poker. Gail Cockran (we had learned that was her name) idly drew designs upon a square of tracing-paper. A little frown marred the smooth beauty of her brow. She was obviously restless. This was not surprising. It was not a country for women. The great distances, the singing wind, the austere background of the mountains depressed them. A harsh, infinitely beautiful land, but not calculated to contribute to the niceties of life. I felt a little sorry for her. Steve was right. A man's camp is hardly the place for a young and delicately reared girl.

As I was speculating on the length of time she would remain with us, the tent flap opened and Steve came in. Seating himself on an upturned transit-box, he began rolling one of his interminable brown-paper cigarettes. Gail brightened perceptibly. Steve was a good-looking young animal, and though he affected to scorn a regard for his personal appearance, I observed that there was ever about him a certain picturesque harmony of garb which pleasingly accented his strong quality of youth. Beyond a carefully polite acknowledgment of her presence, however, Steve appeared quite indifferent to Gail. The frown returned. Flicking his cigarette in the general direction of the Sibley stove, he addressed me: "Professor, I got an interesting problem in psychology for yu. Why should a sheep-herder get all brewed up, dress hisself in evening clothes, and be drinking champagne out here in a sheep-wagon in the midst of the great American desert?"

"I'll bite. Why?"

"Of course, I always heard they were crazy. This Cousin Jack, now. He's sure loco. Why, it ain't reasonable. Champagne and dress clothes out here in the sage-brush."

"You've been 'seen' things at night, Steve. Why should you malign the character of a harmless English sheep-herder who plays the piano slightly better than he should?"

"It was this way," Steve went on. "I was out lookin' for Hobo and Toughie (they were the much-petted line team) and I saw the Englishman's wagon, all lighted up. I was goin' close to it, anyway, and when I got near I heard some one talkin' like he was makin' a speech. 'He's got to the stage where he talks to hisself,' I thought, and was just goin' by when I heard a funny noise, a kind of musical 'plop.' It stirred a dim memory so I sneaked over, climbed up on the wagon-tongue and looked in. Here was the Cousin Jack, all dressed up in badly creased evening clothes, drinking champagne out of a water-glass and toasting his dog settin' up in another chair and lookin' a lot more sane than his master. There sure was a wild light in that guy's eye."

"A perfectly nasty thing for you to do." We turned in surprise to Gail Cockran. She was regarding Steve with a level glance out of cold eyes. "He had a right to his privacy. He wasn't interfering with you and you were a cad to intrude."

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"Guilty, as charged, ma'm," said Steve, his face red with embarrassment. "Like yu say, I hadn't the right."

"It simply proves that he *has* been a gentleman, whatever he may be now. He, at least, *sounds* interesting, which is more than I can say for other people in this charming country." She slid down from the high stool upon which she had been sitting with a lithe, graceful movement. As she stood, I was struck by the thought of how highly artificial and how highly desirable she was. "I'm going to bed. Good night, Jim." This to her brother. But he stopped her as she was leaving the tent. "Don't make any mistake about sheep-herders, Gail. Socially, they don't exist in Wyoming. Generally, they're a pretty bad lot."

"I'm not responsible for the priggish notions of bucolic propriety. But I think I'd like to know the English sheep-herder."

"Women are the devil," said Cockran. "Now, let's get that damned curve plotted."

The next day as we were waiting for the transit party to catch up with us, Steve again took up the topic which was troubling him. "What Cockran said last night. Is that the way you treat 'em up here in the North, sure 'nuff?"

"No native would herd sheep. I think he'd starve first."

"Then why do the Cousin Jacks get into it?"

"The ones who come to Wyoming generally can't stay anywhere else for various reasons. The pay is fairly good and it offers the easiest way to get what they generally want—whiskey."

But Steve's eyes were fastened upon some spot in the broken line of foot-hills. Suddenly he rose and, grasping the level, began adjusting the tripod to the point he wished to bring into focus. He looked for a long moment, then turned to me with an odd smile on his lips. "Yu remember what I said that night at the supper-table?"

"Trouble?" I asked.

"Sure as hell," Steve replied. I rose and took his place at the instrument. It was the Englishman and Gail, brought almost into speaking distance, it seemed, by the powerful glass. They were seated on a little knoll, the herder staring moodily at the ground, tossing little pebbles from one hand to the other. As I watched, he rose with a quick movement and pointed, almost imperiously, back to where our camp lay a bright spot amid the darkness of the sage. I could almost hear the throaty gurgle of her laugh as she threw back her head, her eyes tauntingly upon his. Then she, too, rose and faced him. Guiltily I shouldered the level. Steve rolled a brown-paper cigarette, lighted it, and spun the match off between thumb and forefinger. He inhaled deeply. "Well, professor," he asked, "do you think it'll rain?"

## IV

A FEW days later we moved camp. It became necessary, at this time, to abandon the wagons, storing everything which was not essential to our daily existence at Kenston's road ranch to be picked up when we returned. The teams were converted to pack-animals. No wagon could be hauled through the country through which we proposed to go, the then remote section of Wyoming called Jackson's Hole. Antone moaned and wailed bitterly. He could not walk. How could he cook without his range? What were Dutch ovens? Pots for savages to mess about in.

As our small cavalcade got under way I saw a tall figure standing motionless upon a little rise of ground, his face turned in our direction. I had met the Englishman the day before, buying tobacco at Kenston's, and though I was surprised at his changed appearance (he was dressed in neat khaki and tightly laced boots) there was a wintry grimness about his face as bleak as the eyes of old men one sometimes sees on the benches of city parks. Steve, walking beside me, caught my glance. "We *could* have worked from this camp a week longer, did you think of that?" he asked.

That night, working late in the office tent, his remark came back to me. Cockran and Gail were talking in her tent, their voices audible as though they were in an adjacent room with an open door. "I tell you, I won't have it. As long as you're with me you'll do as I say."

"That is a problem very easily remedied, Jim. I can leave."

"What's come over you, child? Where's your pride? What's the matter with these young chaps in camp if you're

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"There is a government bench-mark under that rock cairn. I piled the stone around it myself, just to kill time."—Page 168.

bored. Clean kids, just out of school." Cockran's voice suddenly lost its tone of command, became almost pleading.

"That's just it. Their minds are as blank as their lives. I've had them around me all my life—or exact patterns of them. I'm sick to death of them. I want to know men who've seen life—like Mr. Crombie. And whatever he's been, Jim, he has the instincts of a gentleman. His grave courtesy when he talks to me is just lovely. I know a dozen girls who'd be crazy about him."

"I wish you hadn't come out here, Gail. You don't understand this country. Sheep-herders——"

"Oh, for heaven's sake, Jim. Don't you be a provincial prig, too. Nothing is going to hurt your sweet little sister. Gosh, Jim, what a dear old lady you are!" The conversation ceased and presently Cockran came in looking worried and preoccupied.

But if he had a plan in the hurried moving of camp it proved unavailing. As the days sped by (they are magically short in



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that high country) it became known in camp that Gail and the Englishman were seeing each other almost daily. It grew to be a subject for guarded discussion in the office and bull tents. What would Cockran do? What was the girl after? A sheep-herder! Good-looking guy, though. You never could tell about skirts. Beat hell if she up and married him. If she were *their* sister they knew what *they'd* do. She'd go back East faster than she came out. What did she want with him, a burned-out chap like that? When an Englishman got to herding sheep he was through. As the weeks passed there grew up a sort of electric tension among the men when Gail came into the cook tent where meals were served. I think each of us would have welcomed the stage which would take her back to Casper and the East.

## V

I MET the Englishman one day while searching for a bench-mark. He was horseback (borrowed, I presumed, at the road ranch) and he suddenly hailed me: "Lost anything?"

"No," I answered shortly. "I'm looking for a bench. Know what that is?"

"There is a government bench-mark under that rock cairn," he replied, pointing toward a little mound of stone atop a small hill, a quarter of a mile distant. "I piled the stone around it myself, just to kill time. I believe you will find the elevation figures quite legible."

"It must be rather dull, all by yourself," I suggested as we walked. "I suppose one becomes used to it, though?"

"Yes, I imagine one could become accustomed to hell, given time. If it weren't for the dog I'd go crazy as all sheep-herders are supposed to do. Sometimes I wonder if I'm not."

"Why do you do it?"

"A man must do something. It's better than rotting in the saloons in Casper."

"But there must be other things for a man like you?"

"There *are* other things to do, of course. But *not* for men like me. I happen to be one of the class that doesn't fit in."

Something in the quiet bitterness of his voice made me glance quickly at his face. I was shocked by the look of despair written there. He was younger than I had thought. Hardly past thirty, yet his hair was grayed at the temples and there were lines in his face not brought by years. I did not reply. I felt embarrassed and, somehow, deeply sorry for him. Yet I think he would have resented this had he known it. He possessed an indefinable air of race and breeding which effectively shut out any expression of sympathy.

We found the bench-mark as he had indicated. This was fortunate as I wanted something with which to check our line on levels. I could run to this the next day with a few shots from an old bench-mark. I thanked him and held out my hand. He nodded. "If you're going back to your camp I'll walk along with you. Miss Cockran has been kind enough to invite me to supper." I covered my surprise and, as we walked, leading his horse, we talked of various things—the weather, the proposed railroad, the country. "Do you like it here in Wyoming?" he asked.

"Yes. Do you?"

"It hasn't made much difference where I've lived. But yes, it's beautiful. These mountains would give a chap a rest from living if he would stop to look at them."

We went on, for a time, in silence. Dusk was dropping swiftly down upon the land. The air seemed saturated with the strong odor of sage. A thin haze began to creep upward from the floor of the valley. Soon we were wading in it, knee-deep. Now that I was with him one of the airs he played that day at Kenston's kept running through my mind hauntingly. "Oh, Willie, We Have Missed You." "I heard you play one day at Kenston's," I remarked abruptly.

"Then I must have been drunk. I never play unless I'm blind. It's the only time when music doesn't make me want to blow the show and get out."

I was certain he was unaware of how theatrical it sounded. He was too sad for that. There was a strong quality of pathos about the man that made me want to help him. "I wish there were something I could do—" I began rather confusedly. But he broke in quickly: "There isn't, old chap. Not a thing. Decent of you, though, thanks. Is that your camp?"

As we neared the tents he spoke again suddenly: "That was the first time I saw Miss Cockran, that day at Kenston's.

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God! How sweet her face looked in that room of men. I can't tell you how it's been to know and talk to a fine woman again." And somehow, as I felt the intensity of his voice, I became filled with a rage which even then I was at a loss to understand. Rage at Gail Cockran. But, I quickly reflected, it wasn't my affair how she chose to amuse herself. Yet, she could have let him alone.

Supper was a difficult time. All must have felt the constraint, as palpable, almost, as something to be touched. As the meal progressed I admired Crombie more. He maintained a quiet aloofness which even Cockran's cold hostility did not disturb. Gail was at her best, talking and laughing with every one. Yet, I knew, she was aware of the tension. Her quick glances at Crombie and her brother told me that. By not the flicker of an eyelash did she betray it, howe er. She was dressed in a white-woollen sweater and short skirt which accentuated the soft curves of her graceful young body. Once or twice I caught Crombie's eyes upon her. The hunger in them appalled me. I was glad when, the meal over, the Englishman rose to take his leave. He held Gail's hand a moment and thanked her in his grave, restrained manner. It was hard to think of him as a sheep-herder then. There was a subtle suggestion of something finer than any one of us knew. Cockran stood beside me in the doorway as the Englishman rode off. Suddenly he muttered, "The devil take women," and strode away in the direction of the office tent.

## VI

It was evident that Mrs. Kenston wanted to say something to me when, a week later, I went for the accumulated mail. She drew me into the room where the battered grand stood in faded magnificence. Shutting the door she turned to me quickly. "That girl. That Miss Cockran. What is she like?"

"Why, I don't know. That's a difficult question to put to a man. Your own judgment would be better."

She was silent a moment, nervously pleating her skirt. Then, suddenly: "Is she serious about Crombie?"

"Serious? How should I know? What do you mean?"

"Listen," she went on hurriedly. "Yesterday afternoon they were here. She got him to play for her. He didn't want to, but she kept on teasing him to. He said he hated music, but she wouldn't let him alone. Then, finally, he played and I never heard anything like it. You know, there was something in his music. It made me want to cry. He played for a half-hour, I guess, and then everything was quiet for a while. I thought they had gone out and I came in to see. Just before I got to the door I heard him talking. He was begging her to do something and he kept saying it over and over: 'Don't fail me, Gail. Don't, don't fail me. With you I can do it. Without you—' It was terrible. The sound of his voice, I mean. I couldn't hear her voice very well. Only once in a while her little laugh. Somehow, when she did that it made me want to hurt her. You know, I like Crombie. He's just a poor fellow that's lost his way. After she had gone, I got him in here. He showed me a letter. It was from his brother in England. Something about starting again. Something about a ranch. Crombie was just like a boy, laughing and excited. What I want to know is what's she trying to do? Does she care for him?"

"I really don't know, Mrs. Kenston. I like Crombie, too. But I guess we'll have to wait and see."

As I rode back to camp Crombie's words kept running through my mind. "Don't fail me, Gail; don't fail me." Was it possible that affairs had gone that far? Did she really care for him? One thing I was certain of: I didn't care to be about when Crombie found out if she didn't. It isn't pleasant to see a man smash up after he's started back. Somehow, he had been much in my thoughts. That indefinable air he carried about with him. It lifted him out of sheep-herding. I had even ceased to think of him in that connection. He was just a wistful kid, off on the wrong foot.

That night, in the office tent, the discussion came up about moving camp. We were walking rather too far to work each morning. Cockran turned to his sister: "Gail, it's getting late in the season. We might be snowed in at any time. Strikes me you'd better be thinking about that. I'd like to have you stay, but you

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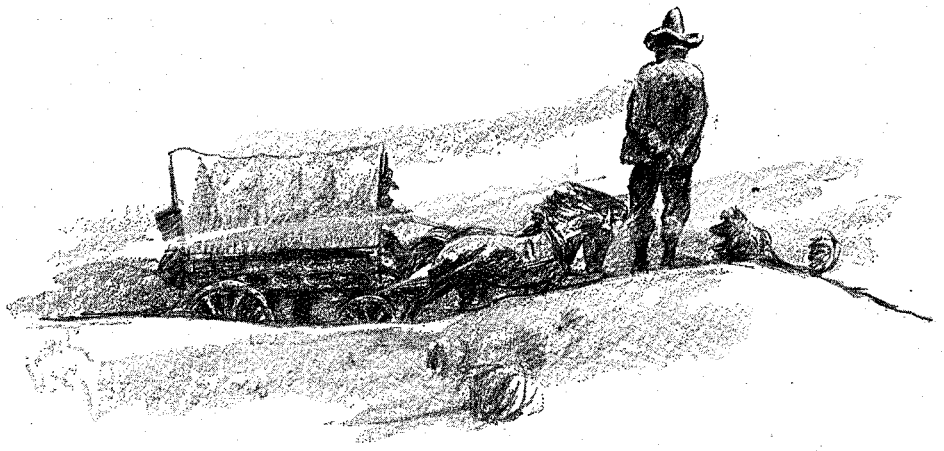

"Say, Old Timer," yelled the teamster, . . . "how far is it to Casper?"—Page 161.

know what snow in the mountains means —hibernation."

"Oh, do you think so, Jim? Do you really think I'd better go back? Surely, snow wouldn't be a serious matter so early in the fall?" She kept glancing at each of us, twisting her handkerchief in her fingers. She was plainly distressed. "I hadn't thought of leaving so soon. Really, I'm beginning to like it here. It will be so—so cramped back home after this."

"Not so cramped as a rag house in winter, I imagine," said her brother dryly.

That night the first snow fell, white and soft, blanketing the mountains and standing six inches high on the branches of the pine-trees. I met Gail going into the office as I was preparing to go out on the "line." "Well," she smiled at me brightly, "I'd better say good-by. My brother thinks I'm a tender flower to wilt at the first touch of frost."

She held out her hand with a little laugh. I took it and looked at her directly. "Taking any trophies with you? Elk heads or scalps or anything like that?"

"Nothing but some pleasant memories," she replied, but her face colored swiftly. "Do you know any that I might take?"

"None that you don't already have."

"You're referring to——"

"The same thing you're thinking of."

She smiled at me with perfect composure. "I think it's so silly to take things home from a vacation. So much more picturesque in their own environment, don't you think so?" I bowed to her and walked away, but I caught a malicious glint from the corner of her eye as she went through the tent flap.

A few hours later Steve motioned toward the white expanse of the valley. A black dot, no larger than a man's hand, was crawling through the snow. I turned the level upon it. It was the Casper stage. From a window I caught the flutter of something white. Steve stepped to the glass and then turned abruptly away.

I would like to have avoided it but I couldn't. Supper was just over when Crombie came into the office tent where Cockran and I were working. His lips were compressed and the excitement under which he was laboring was evident in the nervous opening and closing of his hands, delicately shaped hands with their long, slender fingers. He stood for a time without speaking, his eyes on Cockran, then on me. Cockran rose and, unconsciously, I thought, went forward and placed his hand on the Englishman's arm. He was looking at Crombie compassionately, a worried frown upon his brow. "They told me at Kenston's," Crombie began at last with difficulty, "that Miss Cockran— Is she—is she——"

"I'm sorry, sorry, old fellow. Mighty sorry."

He stood, for a long moment, without speaking. A white, bitter smile twisted his lips. "Well," he said at last,



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"quite a snow. Rather early, what?" Then, abruptly, he turned and left the tent.

As I said, we were driving to Casper through a smother of biting, blinding snow. Suddenly, beside the half-obliterated trail, loomed the figure of a man, his sheepskin coat collar turned up against the icy blast, a collie dog crouched at his feet. "Say, Old Timer," yelled the teamster, striving to lift his voice above the noise of the wind, "How far is it to Casper?" The man turned to us slowly. There was a familiar line about the lean, weathered face. "Casper?" he asked with a smile which I thought was ironic and bitter. "I think I can tell you exactly." He turned to his dog and waved his arm in the direction of the gray, crawling mass of sheep. "Go way around 'em, Shep." Then back to us: "Forty dollars a month!" he spat out, like an oath. "That's how far it is to Casper."

"Crazy," muttered the teamster, "crazy as hell."

The wind swooped upon us with a shout carrying a cloud of fine, dry snow. The teamster shook the reins. A few moments later I looked back. But all I saw were the twisting wraiths of snow and the gray-green clumps of sage.

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# The American Revolver and the West

BY WALTER PRESCOTT WEBB

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ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS

THE revolver as a factor in the development of America has never received serious consideration, either from the historian or the literary man. The former has neglected it entirely, while the latter has neither understood it nor its true place in our national life. Too frequently he has used it as his chief stock in trade in portraying certain striking types of American men—the Texas Ranger, the cowboy, or the bad man on horseback. The sensational story-writers, the moving pictures, and even worthier literary men, are loath to abandon this original idea. To them and to their public—which is large—the Westerner is a man with a six-shooter—he wears it low and pulls it smokin'. This has become the tradition of the West, something of a stigma which must be explained. It is proposed here to account historically for the revolver, give its origin, explain its rapid spread, its notorious popularity, and interpret its true significance to that region with which it has been so intimately associated.

Definition or description of a weapon that is known and recognized the world over is hardly necessary. Briefly, the American revolver is a pistol with a rotating cylinder containing five or six chambers, each of which discharges through a single barrel. It is six pistols encompassed in one, commonly known to its familiars as a "gun," "six-gun," "shooting-iron," "six-shooter," or "Colt." The Colt was the original revolver. It furnished the principle upon which all others have been constructed, and it is around the Colt that this account is written.

The revolver has not been associated impartially with all the West. The real six-shooter land is the Southwest, comprising Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico, and to a less extent the States farther north. And of all these States Texas wears the six-chambered crown. How those Texans can shoot! A recent visitor there bore a commission from a friend in the East to "pick me up a real Texas six-shooter, preferably one with notches." An example of how this notion is furthered by literary men is found in a book by a well-known author which tells the story of a deadly feud between cattle-

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men and rustlers in Arizona. The author had the feud start among the "gun-throwers" of Texas, and then had both factions adjourn to Arizona, where the shooting was resumed with relish, and when the smoke cleared both sides were wiped out to the last man—a sanguine tribute to Texan marksmanship.

Is this association of the six-shooter with the Southwest incorrect or unjust? Yes and no. The West has outlived the six-shooter as Kentucky has the long rifle, or Massachusetts witch-baiting. But the popular conception of the six-shooter as the weapon of the West, the Southwest, and especially of Texas, is based upon facts which are so clear and convincing as to destroy doubt, and yet so simple as to create surprise that they have not been presented before. The six-shooter, though invented by an ingenious New Englander, was first used and proved in Texas, spreading later through the West, and filling a need that existed only in Texas and the West. Upon a far-flung stage the drama of the six-shooter has been played out and many actors have participated, but the principal rôle has been played by the Texas Rangers.

Our first consideration is the West, that land of splendid adventure lying between the Mississippi and the Pacific. We are particularly concerned with that interior region—the true West—extending from the Mississippi to the Rockies. This river-bound and mountain-walled area is characterized so boldly by nature as to set it apart from the remainder of the continent, a great ribbon of prairie some three or four hundred miles wide flung along the meridians of a continent from Mexico to Canada. This vast and treeless region is known as the Plains area, and within its limits the institutions and traditions of the West have had their origin, have attained their fullest development.

Within this great corridor of nature primitive life was strikingly different from that on either hand. The buffalo was the most conspicuous form of animal life, and as the seasons swung round from hot to cold great herds of these beasts tramped north in the spring and south before the oncoming cold in the fall. Closely associated with the buffalo herds were the Plains Indians, as different in culture from their neighbors east and west as the prairies were different from the forests and mountains. Like the buffalo, they too moved north and south, rarely entering the forest area except as plunderers of their less predatory neighbors. Such in general was the life in the Plains corridor when the white man appeared.

The first effect of the white man's coming was beneficial to the Plains Indians—such strange and incongruous shadows do coming events sometimes cast. It was in the sixteenth century that the Spanish *conquistadores* let some of their horses escape in Mexico. In the course of time the wild progeny of these animals covered the southern country and pushed northward onto the rich pasturage of the Plains, leaving their Spanish masters far behind.

But if the horses outtravelled their old masters it was only to find new ones. The Plains Indians learned to ride, and came to look upon the horse as a God-given boon, a marvellous space-conquering agent which enabled them to move with wonderful celerity over the wide reaches of the plain. Very shortly the Plains Indians became the horse Indians of America, and superb horsemanship became their predominating characteristic. It emphasized their nomadism and further contrasted them with their humbler sedentary and pedestrian neighbors. Here was a great revolution in Indian transportation.

Now it so happened that at the southern entrance of the Plains corridor dwelt the singularly ferocious Comanche Indians. Because of their location, they quite naturally were among the first to secure horses, and they developed horsemanship to a superlative degree. Here the whole story of the revolver hinges on the equestrian skill of the Comanche, the Texas Indian. It was his horsemanship, coupled with his warlike disposition, which in time affected not only his own weaponry but that of the white man who came against him. As a mounted warrior, the Comanche was incomparable. Since he was the greatest horseman, he would become, if not the greatest warrior, then the greatest *mounted* warrior, and this he did become. He was a terrible foe, a foe on horseback; those who came to meet

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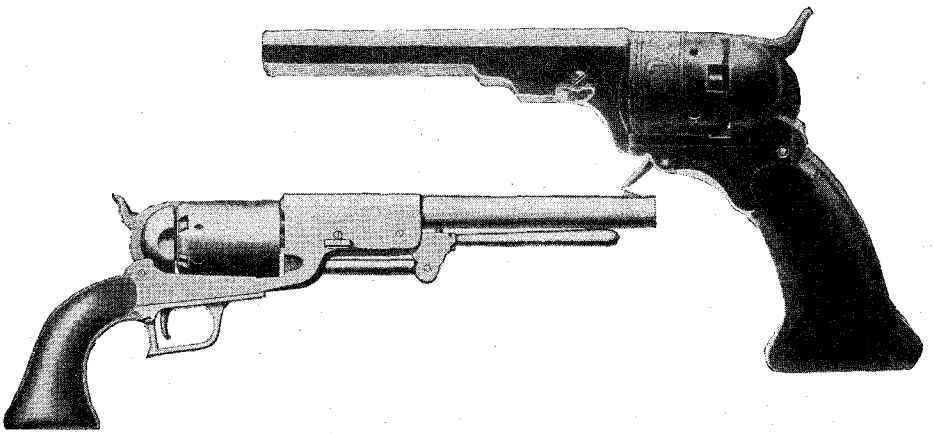
him in war must come likewise on horseback, and with weapons suitable for *mounted* combat.

Two races of white men were coming to meet the Plains Indians, the Spaniards from the south and the Americans from the east. In fact, the Spaniards had been for some time in contact with the Plains Indians, but were unable to make headway against them. Their frontier line, supported by the picturesque missions, stopped abruptly in southern Texas, the southern extremity of the Plains area, recoiling, as it were, from the Comanche country. And, when Spain finally let fall from her palsied hand her American empire, Mexico became free, with Texas as her northern province. But what hope had the Mexicans where the Spaniards had failed? The Comanches called them "our horse-raisers," and it is said by tradition that they compelled Mexican soldiers to hold their horses while they engaged in riotous celebration in the towns. Truly, it was not for a Latin people to work out a fighting organization that could meet the Comanche Indian on horseback.

All the while the Anglo-American frontier was far to the east. Though it was advancing, destined soon or late to cut athwart the north-south flowing life currents of the Plains corridor, it had not yet penetrated that region at any point. The people of the States termed the Plains corridor the Great Desert; they knew next to nothing of the Plains Indians, their culture, or their warlike character. But some of them were soon to learn.

In the year 1821 Stephen F. Austin brought into Texas a colony from the United States. It was the first time that Anglo-Americans had been permitted to enter the fertile border province. From Tennessee, Alabama, Kentucky, and other States came that lean-jawed and lank invader of the West, the American pioneer. As ever he carried his rifle on his arm and the indomitable spirit of freedom in his heart. Truly a new man had entered the *mélange* of Texas, a rugged and bold spirit who would never hold the horse of the Comanche—a simple and a dangerous man who would not be turned aside. He was the founder of a new nation, almost an empire. Here, at last, in this adventurous offshoot of Anglo-Saxonism, was the real Texan. To him it mattered not that he had outrun all his fellow countrymen, that in his impatience for the West he had outstripped the American frontier. He cared not that he was to be the first to break into the Plains corridor, the first to meet the Indian in mounted warfare.



Above: "The Texas" pistol, the original Colt revolver.
Below: Walker pistol, named for Samuel H. Walker.

But this white man did not meet the Comanche in a spirit of misguided altruism. His was a hard-handed and infrangible policy of extermination based upon the conviction that the good Indian was the dead Indian. Out of the merciless conflict in which he engaged there emerged such a weapon as the world had not seen—the Texan's weapon, the

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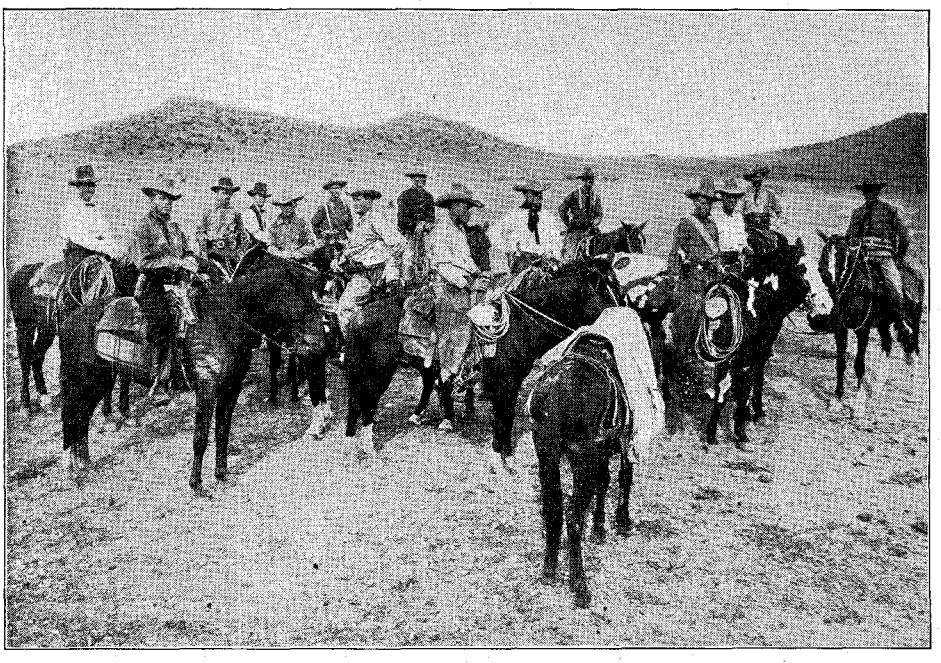
Plains' weapon, the horseman's weapon that has placed its mark on the entire Plains area.

But the Anglo-Americans who came to Texas—hereafter to be called Texans—had certain preliminary tasks to perform. Placed on the borders of the Plains country, adjacent to Mexicans and Indians—both horsemen—they had to learn to ride.



A band of Texas Rangers as they now are.
Note that the revolver is a prominent part of their equipment.

This is a startling assertion, but nevertheless true. The Americans east of the Mississippi were not riders, and never have been riders as the Westerner understands the word. These Texans, the first real American horsemen, learned from the Mexicans. Their next task was to throw off their Mexican masters and set up the independent Republic of Texas.

The period of the Republic—1836–1845—was one of continuous war waged on two long frontiers, against the Mexicans on the south and the Plains Indians on the north and west. The attackers always came on horseback with an organization mobile and fleet and elusive; they had to be met and pursued on horseback with an organization equally mobile. But a sparse population and an empty treasury gave Texas few men to enlist and little to pay them with. Whatever fighting force she devised had to be not only mobile and fleet, but small and economical. From such hard conditions was evolved what is sometimes called the most remarkable set of fighting men that the world has ever known—the Texas Rangers. "A Texas Ranger," said a local writer, "can ride like a Mexican, trail like an Indian, shoot like a Tennesseean, and fight like a very devil." These daring men, under the command of their border chieftain, Jack Hays, were stationed at San Antonio, and from that point scoured the Texas border far and near in search of marauding Indians and pillaging Mexicans.

The weaponry of the Texas Ranger and of his enemies now engages our attention. The Texans, of course, had the rifle. The American long rifle has been designated as one of the principal factors in the conquest of America, and its praises have been duly sung. This weapon, however, was designed for use on the ground—not on horseback. It developed in the woods east of the Mississippi for service

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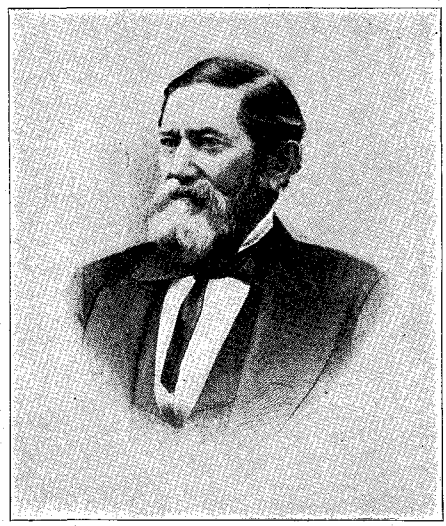
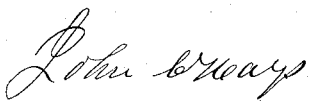
in the forests and glades when the user had both feet planted firmly on solid earth. The "hair trigger," the "double sights," the "fine bead" are terms significant of a weapon nicely adjusted and carefully aimed. Furthermore, the loading of these old weapons was a particular and time-consuming task, which also had to be performed on the ground. That the rifle was no horseman's weapon is certain. The sword and lance, outworn relics of the pre-gunpowder era, were his traditional weapons, but the Texans had nothing but contempt for them. "Swords," said Sam Houston, "would be of great use to the Rangers—especially in a snake country!" The American pioneer did take to Texas with him the pistol, the duelling-piece, the pocket derringer, or the large horse-pistol. The latter alone was designed for use on horseback, but a horseman could hardly carry more than two of them. At best it was possible in those days for the mounted Texan to carry but three shots, one in his rifle and one in each of the two pistols in his belt.

The Comanche brave, on his part, carried a tough rawhide shield hung on his left arm, a fourteen-foot spear, a sinew-backed bow, and a full quiver of flint-tipped arrows. These weapons he had used effectively against the buffalo, and he turned them now against the Texans. In noting the relative advantages possessed by each in mounted combat, it is surprising to realize that in most respects the Indian had the best of it. He had more shots, he could discharge them so rapidly from his running horse, we are told, as to keep an arrow in the air all the time, and he could remain mounted throughout the engagement. In pursuit or in retreat, the Texan with his three shots in his three cumbersome guns was at a great disadvantage. Undoubtedly, he needed a new weapon, something with a reserve power, capable of "continuous action"; he needed an engine of war more rapid than the arrows, of longer reach than the spear, and, above all, adapted to use on horseback.

The man who supplied the weapon that fulfilled all these necessities was a Connecticut Yankee by the name of Samuel Colt. The story of Colt's invention, his struggle, confessed failure, and final success—coupled as it was with the Texas Rangers—is a tale which for dramatic interest is perhaps not excelled in the annals of American achievement. "Colt found the pistol a single-shooter and left it a six-shooter. Thus judged the Texan Rangers, when they coined this new word 'six-shooter,' to describe a thing no less new among men, an engine which rendered them victorious against fearful odds, and over both Mexicans and Indians."





Captain John C. (Jack) Hays, first great ranger captain, the man who led the Texas Rangers when they first used the revolvers.

In 1830 Samuel Colt, at the age of sixteen, shipped as a sailor from Boston to Calcutta. On this voyage he whittled from wood his first model of a revolving pistol. He took his first patent in England in 1835, and one in America in 1836, the same year that the Texans declared and established the Lone Star Republic. Two years later a company was organized at Paterson, New Jersey, which took over Colt's patents and models with a view to manufacturing them in commercial quantities. The inventor was to receive a royalty, improve his weapons, and promote the introduction of the new arms, particularly with the government.

These first revolvers had a curious history. The government condemned them and private citizens would not buy them,

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but for some mysterious reason orders began to come in from the far-off Republic of Texas. Just how the pistols got to Texas is unknown; but the fact remains that the six-shooter had found its way into the hands of those hard-pressed men who needed it most, the Texas Rangers.

The very names given to these early guns bespeak the influence of Texas in their development. It has already been noted that the term "six-shooter" was coined by the Texas Rangers. Colt's first successful gun, the model which became famous, was named the *Texas*. A second model was brought out about 1842 with improvements over the old one, but it was a Texas Ranger who suggested the improvements, and it was for him that the weapon was named. Ranger Captain Samuel Walker went to New York to purchase a supply of the latest firearms, and while there arranged to meet the inventor of the *Texas*. As a result of the conference Colt made a new pistol, the first military revolver. This weapon was heavier than the *Texas*, had a trigger-guard, and the rammer attached. This was the famous *Walker Pistol*.

The battle of Pedernales has good claims to being the first in which the six-shooter was used on the mounted Indians. The border chieftain, Hays, with fourteen of his men, had gone out from San Antonio to look for Indians, and on his return discovered about seventy Redskins following him. In the desperate battle that ensued the Rangers "shot them down with their pistols." "That," said Major Caperton, "was the best-contested fight that ever took place in Texas, and it showed that the Rangers could whip the Indians on horseback . . . the pistols gave them the advantage. That was the first time pistols were used in a fight with the Indians." In her "Memoirs" Mrs. Maverick says that Captain Hays came to her father's house a few days after the battle and gave her the account which she wrote down at the time. "Hays," she says, "modestly gave the credit of the victory to the wonderful marksmanship of every Ranger, and the total surprise of the Indians, caused by the new six-shooters, which they had never seen or heard of before."

Soon after this battle Hays found further proof of the value of the revolvers in a fight in Nueces canyon. Here the Indians in greatly superior numbers made the attack, sweeping around the Rangers on both sides and discharging their arrows as they passed. Hays and his men first emptied their rifles and then sprang into their saddles for pursuit. "Never," said an old Indian-fighter, "was a band of Indians more surprised than at this charge. They expected the Rangers to remain on the defensive, and . . . to exhaust their ammunition. . . . In vain the Comanches tried to turn their horses and make a stand, but such was the wild confusion of running horses, popping pistols, and yelling Rangers that they abandoned the idea of a rally and sought safety in flight." In the pursuit, the Rangers literally carried out their leader's orders to "powder-burn them," causing the Indians to drop bows, shields, and lances all along the route. Years later the Comanche chief of the band said that he never wanted to fight Jack Hays and his Rangers again, that they had a shot for every finger on the hand, and that he lost half his warriors, who died for a hundred miles back toward Devil's River.

The Rangers themselves were fully aware of the advantages which the revolvers gave them. "They are the only weapon," said Major Howard, "which has enabled the experienced frontiersmen to defeat the *mounted* Indian in his own peculiar mode of warfare." It was the effectiveness of the six-shooter, he said, that had rendered the name of Texas Ranger a check and terror to all marauders of the long frontier, a terror so well expressed in Trombly's border ballad:

"Ask the Apache the why of his going,
Ask the Comanche, he's not without knowing;

Question the Mexican thief and marauder
Why his respect for the great Texas border;

Question them all, these beaten-back strangers,
White-lipped, they'll tremble and whisper, 'The Rangers!'"

The evidence that the revolver had been proved, had found its place as the perfect weapon for the horseman, or the man who waged war on the Plains Indians, seems unmistakably clear.

Meantime, the American frontier to the north was about to emerge from the woods, was just ready to push into the

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Plains area, the horse country, and the future six-shooter land. Thousands of guns would be demanded each year, factories would rise up, and millions would pour into the hands of the ingenious inventor. But it was too late—disaster had already overtaken Samuel Colt.

In 1842 the Paterson factory went into bankruptcy. The manufacture of the revolvers ceased, the patents were sold, and the inventor was in comparative want, apparently a ruined man. The refusal of the United States Government to adopt his arms, the inability of Texas to make large purchases, and the absence of a pressing need for a mounted man's weapon in the States, all contributed to his disaster. For five years his outlook was gloomy, but the gods continued to grind. We have seen how Colt saved the Texas Rangers; it remains to show how they saved him.

The Republic of Texas ceased to exist in 1845, and became a State in the Union. War followed with Mexico, and soon the American army under General Zachary Taylor came marching through Texas on its way south to the Rio Grande. The Texas Rangers were delighted with this turn of affairs. If they relished anything more than fighting Indians it was fighting Mexicans, hatred of whom had been engendered by a long period of border strife. The result was that all of them offered their services to General Taylor and were accepted. Hays commanded the regiment, with Ben McCulloch, Sam Walker, Mike Chevaille, Rip Ford, and Big Foot Wallace as officers. They went mounted, served principally as spies and scouts—the eyes and ears of Taylor's army. They proved invaluable because of their intimacy with Mexican tactics, and the service they rendered in this war spread their fame throughout the world.

The Rangers supplied their own arms, chief of which was the *Texas* six-shooter. "The so-called Texan model the Rangers soon made a terror to the Mexicans and all enemies, and of world-wide renown." But there were not enough of these, and the Rangers began to clamor for them, demand them. Finally General Taylor, in response to these demands, requisitioned the government for one thousand Colt revolvers. This was in January, 1847.

But Colt revolvers were not to be had. One had not been made for five years, and the inventor was a bankrupt. War, however, is a powerful mover of human destiny. And though the government had many times rejected Colt's overtures, it now sought him out, and asked him to furnish one thousand weapons. The price, twenty-eight thousand dollars.

Colt had no money and no machinery; he did not even have a six-shooter to use as a model, if we can believe his testimony before the English House of Commons. But he did have faith, and he set to work overcoming obstacles. First, he advertised for one of his own weapons to use as a model, and failing to find one, made a new gun with improvements. He then contracted with Whitney, manufacturer of cotton-gins and firearms, to make the revolvers at Whitneyville, Connecticut. On his first contract he realized a three thousand dollar *loss*. But recognition had come, success was assured, and in a few years Colt was a millionaire. He had made a better gun; with it the Texas Rangers had blazed a pathway to his door, and the world was now to pave that pathway with gold.

To explain the spread of the revolver from Texas, north and west, it is necessary to note the territorial consequence of the Mexican War. By the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Mexico ceded all the Southwest to the United States, giving her for the first time complete possession of the whole Plains corridor, and all the West. The entire area was now open to occupation by the American pioneers, and this happened in 1848, the year after the revolver had been proved and had attained its national reputation. Those who now went into the West went on horseback with six-shooters in their belts. As a result, the six-shooter "saturation" of the whole region became pretty thorough at that time, but comparatively greater in the Southwest than in the Northwest, where settlement had preceded its introduction.

The revolver has not been closely identified with the Pacific slope because that region was heavily timbered, unsuited to horsemanship, and fairly well occupied before the weapon became popular. An unusual event gave it whatever promi-



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nence—not to say power—it once enjoyed there. In the same eventful year of 1848 gold was discovered in California, and in the turbulent mining-camps all over the slope and through the mountains the weapon played its sinister rôle. It sold for one hundred dollars gold, and placed a final punctuation-mark to many a rowdy career. But the rule of the revolver was brief on the Pacific slope, and to-day the six-shooter is well-nigh forgotten there save in the Wild West quarters of Hollywood.

The story of the six-shooter ends where it began, in the great Plains corridor, America's last frontier. As the buffalo and the Plains Indians lived together, so did they perish, in the decade 1870–1880; and to-day specimens of them are found only in zoölogical and anthropological reservations. But already other herds and other herders were moving up to fill their places. These herds, like the horses of three centuries before, came up from the south, from Texas, along the Texas Trail, sometimes called the Chisholm Trail. The big herds started in 1866 and continued in endless procession until 1895. From Texas to Colorado, to Wyoming, along the great corridor of the Plains, the life currents were again flowing north and south, as nature seemed to design.

Consider the passing herd, any one of the many that went up the Long Trail. At the "point" ride two men, at the "drag" two more, while other horsemen loiter on either flank. There is something romantic and picturesque about these riders who sit their horses with such natural ease. They ride Mexican saddles, modified into Texas saddles, wear three-gallon hats, modified *sombreros*, red kerchiefs about their necks, high heavy boots, and large-rowelled spurs. From the leather holster at each man's waist protrudes the butt of a Colt revolver. The Texas longhorn and the Texas cowboy are invading the Plains area. They are coming to replace the buffalo and the Indians—to set up the Cattle Kingdom.

Overnight the Texas cowboy became nationalized, an American institution. This cowboy, being a horseman, found the revolver suited to his needs; being a Texan, he already knew how to use it. As a result of it all, the revolver got a new lease on life in the Plains corridor. No man, save the Texas Ranger, has ever carried it with the insouciant air and picturesque charm of the American cowboy. He wore it proudly, he wore it constantly, he wore it openly, on the outside. Sometimes he used it. Sometimes he needed it. And he made for it and himself and the West a great reputation—not all bad. The cowboy dominated the cattle country for twenty years, from 1870 to 1890, and he dominated it with a horse and a six-shooter in the interest of cattle.

Here is a new interpretation of the Wild West, which was not the West, but the great Plains corridor, a day late in its development. Whereas the watered and timbered areas made a direct and rapid transition from barbarism to agriculture, the Plains area took an intermediate step, becoming pastoral first, and reaching the agricultural stage only in the last decade of the nineteenth century. And it was in this intermediate period that the revolver attained its great, and ofttimes sinister reputation, and put its indelible mark on the Western Plains.

Here, too, is the historical explanation of the popular idea that the revolver was most dexterously used in Texas, that it was common in Arizona and New Mexico, and familiar enough in Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, and the Dakotas. Invented by Colt, it was first used and proved against the Comanche Indians on the Plains of Texas, made famous by the Rangers in the Mexican War, distributed immediately afterward over the entire West, but with greater density in the newly acquired and sparsely settled Southwest, and after the Civil War made popular in the cattle country of the Plains area by the American cowboy.

He who would believe that Texans can furnish six-shooters "with notches," and that the citizens of other prairie States can supply them easily but with less decoration, may be conforming somewhat to former historical facts; but he is, at the same time, revealing a naïve unenlightenment as to the present situation. Whatever the abuses the revolver was subjected to—and there were many—it should be borne in mind that its introduction, rapid spread, and popularity throughout the Plains area, the Indian and cattle country, was in response to a genuine need for a horseman's weapon.

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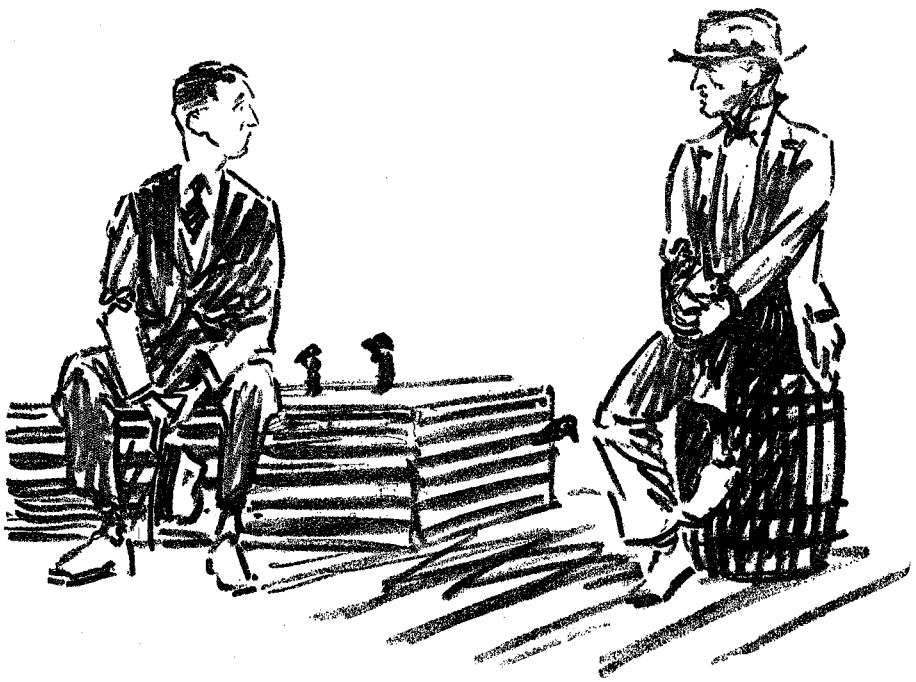

"Say, partner, you are either dumb as hell or you haven't been around much," he rasped out.—Page 188.

# Practicality in Practice

BY RICHARD B. FOWLER

Illustrations by Paul Brown

THE Reverend Walter Hayes walked back and forth between the closed door and the filing-cabinet in the prosperity-breathing office of George Landis, the banker. As he walked he smiled, the smile of one who has seen the light after groping in darkness with forlorn and dying hope.

The Reverend Hayes was in Globe City for the purpose of preaching a series of trial sermons at none other than the Broadway Church. For a young minister not yet thirty years old to aspire to this pulpit might appear absurd. In fact, it had begun to appear hopelessly so to the Reverend Hayes; but now he smiled. He smiled broadly as he thought of his sermons of the past two weeks, those theoretical and erudite sermons that he had prepared with such labored diligence and such intricate care, which had fallen so painfully flat before the hard-headed business and professional men who controlled the destinies of the Broadway Church. Vainly he had hoped to equal the brilliance and learning of those who had been established in this august pulpit in former years.

But now a path toward success was opening for him that had been closed even to them. He turned to the banker.

"Then you think that the congregation would prefer practical sermons of current importance?" he asked by way of emphasizing the information that pleased him.

"Absolutely," answered the banker, leaning forward and looking at Hayes over the top of his glasses. "With all due respect for our former ministers, this



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church needs a live wire, a young man of the world as well as a preacher. We want a practical man. That is why we brought you here on trial for this church."

Hayes did not feel called upon to deny the obvious truth of his practical and worldly qualifications.

The banker scratched on a writing-pad as if trying to preserve his most apt phrases. "The men in our church are wide-awake fellows that do things. They want to hear talks on live, interesting subjects—things of importance—sermons that will give a man something to think about."

He arose, beaming, and escorted the younger man to the door of the office. To give advice was Mr. Landis's business, his duty and, in fact, his pleasure.

'Then the needs of this church coincide perfectly with my peculiar fitness,' thought Hayes to himself, and walked jubilantly home searching his store of knowledge for subjects that would touch the pocketbooks and peace of mind of this very practical congregation. Their impression of his next two or three sermons would determine whether or not he would be installed as the minister of the Broadway Church.

"Yes, as Mr. Landis said, I must give them something to think about," said he to himself, "something important enough to use for the pending crucial sermons."

He rummaged through his experiences gained among men of different walks of life; he called upon his knowledge of sociology, and upon his large fund of general information for fitting themes.

There was one subject of current importance that stood out and away from all the others. It was one in which Hayes was particularly interested, and one to which he had already given hours of close study. It was so large that it should furnish material, not only for the next sermon, but for others. This was the subject of the crime wave, a comprehensive one to say the least.

On the following Sunday he knew that he had chosen well. The interest and attention of his audience awakened instantly to his fervor. The depredations of porch-climbers, safe-blowers, stick-up men, murderers, and common thieves were a source of constant alarm to the law-abiding and property-owning citizens of Globe City. For their benefit Hayes laid bare the annual cost of crime to the country, sketched its dark and gruesome history, analyzed its contributing causes, and decried the blindness, ignorance, and laxness of authorities. Encouraged by the close attention of his congregation, he spoke passionately and from a full heart.

By the end of his hour he had succeeded in presenting the horrible enormity of the crime wave. Since there was no time left to suggest its remedies, he promised such a sermon for the following Sunday. He would deal with combating crime within the very precincts of Globe City. Certainly they could hope for nothing more practical or of greater importance than this.

When the wide church doors swung open to emit the impressed congregation, the immaculate Mr. Hayes was there to bow them on their way.

"Oh, Mr. Hayes, your sermon was adorable!" gushed Miss Ella Smith, looking up soulfully. Miss Smith had been a power in the Young Ladies' Organization for twenty-five years, and her opinion was to be respected.

Mr. Plover, the dry-goods man, stopped with a beaming smile. "A straight-from-the-shoulder talk you gave

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us, Mr. Hayes. I am glad that you are going to talk on combating crime next Sunday. Yes, sir, it's a serious thing. That's what I tell 'em."

Judge Howard came out of the door and paused on his cane.

"I want to shake your hand, young man. That was a very earnest sermon."

"I am glad to hear you say so, judge," smiled Hayes. "I hope you approve of my plan for talking on crime prevention here in Globe City for next Sunday's sermon?"

"I think you will handle it very well, and I wish you success."

Mr. Henry, the grocer, came majestically forward, appearing in his church clothes much more ministerial than Hayes.

"The statistics that you brought out are enough to excite any imagination. They indicate a perilous situation," he said grandly. "You are sounding a clarion note, Mr. Hayes." The grocer moved away, tipping his silk hat at every opportunity.

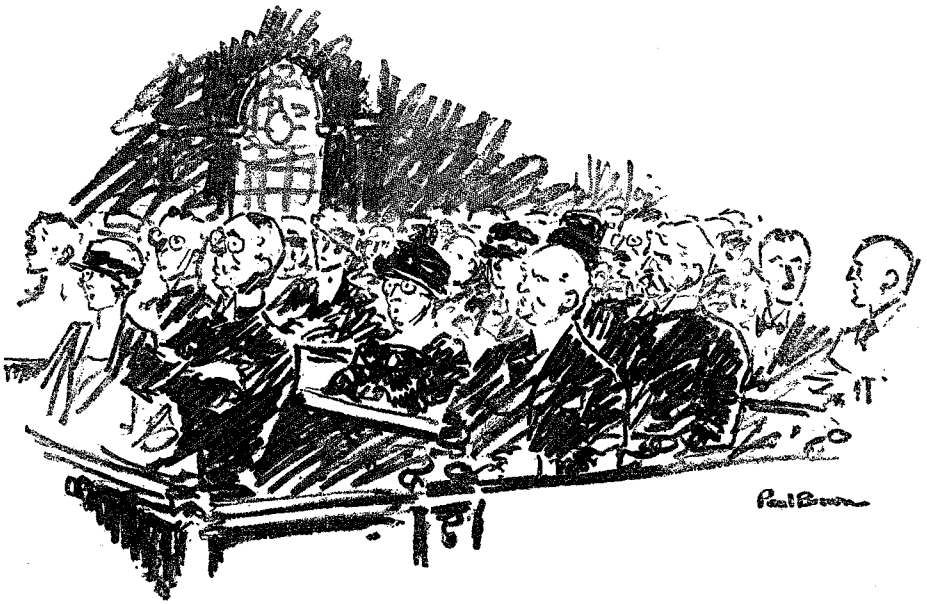
Mrs. Barlow, the lawyer's wife, stopped with a righteous smile.

"I hope you will bring out in your next sermon the lawlessness of buying whiskey from bootleggers," she said, looking grimly at her husband waiting in the car, and then marched down to join him.

"Hayes, I like your way of getting at this crime business." George Landis, the banker, extended his hand.

"Thank you, sir," acknowledged Hayes with a deferential bow.

The banker lit a cigar. "This church has needed a wide-awake man of the world for a long time. I think you have caught on to the idea all right," and the banker smiled knowingly to remind Hayes of the part he had played in pointing out the path. Flicking the ashes from his cigar, the banker walked down to his waiting limousine.



By the end of his hour he had succeeded in presenting the horrible enormity of the crime wave.—Page 180.

Gradually the glistening line of cars moved away from the curb, carrying with them the colorful array of bright dresses, multi-hued hats, dark suits, frock coats, and derbies of the well-to-do congregation.

The Reverend Walter Hayes was left to drive triumphantly home with his wife.

"I believe they liked your sermon, Walter," she said quietly.

Hayes smiled complacently. He lit his pipe—something that he seldom did on

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the street, where the growing boys might cite the example. The sun shone down reflecting cheerfully on the pavement. The birds sang in the leafy trees, and a soft breeze stirred through the car. Hayes chuckled softly, as if thinking of genius and effort rewarded. "Genius is a God-given trait, but effort is tiring and consequently must be taken in moderation," he was unconsciously telling himself.

After dinner as they sat comfortably in their living-room, Hayes idly glanced over a day-old letter from his friend Tom Wilson:

"DEAR DOC,

Chuck, Swede, Hank, and I are leaving Kansas City Monday on the one and only train for Linn Hill. We will pursue the elusive trout and entice the wary bass until our hearts are content. The Ozark air will take the dust out of your brain and leave you with brilliant ideas for sermons. So, put on your oldest and dirtiest and meet our train at Cole's Junction. The train service is excellent, there being one back every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, whether you need it or not. They connect with the limited back to Globe City—if they are lucky. I will warn the boys not to cuss too much, so come on.

Yours,
TOM."

The letter that had been thrown down with a laugh the day before was now handled thoughtfully.

"It might be well for me to go down to the Ozarks with the boys after all," he said finally.

"And leave the church all week?" his wife asked surprised.

"The only way in the world to keep up on the things that confront practical people is to get away from the protection of the church once in a while. Mixing around as a man among men is the way to learn and keep your mind clear," Hayes explained.

"Do you think you'll learn anything from those fellows?" she asked doubtfully.

"Certainly! Next Sunday I am going to preach on combating crime in Globe City. That is a subject that requires a practical knowledge of a lot of definite facts. Some of them I'm a little hazy on. Well, Chuck is a criminal lawyer and can give me valuable information on the subject. Those other chaps will have ideas too. There is nothing like a general discussion of a subject around a camp-fire at night to bring out ideas—clear-cut ideas—free from old-fogy notions."

"But something might happen to keep you from getting back. You might miss your train at the Junction," she argued as a last hope. "If you failed to be here next Sunday it would be awful. You would certainly lose your chance for keeping the church."

"Yes, but I can come back Thursday to make sure of being here," he explained, and the argument was closed.

But when Thursday came, the discussions on crime prevention held around the Ozark camp-fire were still at their height. "Chuck," the criminal lawyer, had gleaned his ideas on the causes of crime and its possible remedies, as well as his information on the characteristics of criminals, from actual contact with them. "Hank" and "Swede" had each had a friend that was later sent to the penitentiary, and they all had ideas. Basing the ideas brought out in these discussions on his rather extensive knowledge of sociology and psychology, Hayes was able to reach amazing and clear-cut conclusions. The nature and characteristics of criminals, he divined, were so simple that any one could learn to recognize them and thereby protect himself. He should be able to assist the machinery of justice in putting them behind prison bars. What chance would a few criminals have against a whole community of discerning and watchful citizens? This would indeed be comforting information to his Globe City congregation.

It is little wonder, then, that one who was in the midst of working out such gratifying and inspiring facts as these should not leave the source of valuable contributory information until the work was finished.

As a result, it was not until Saturday that the Kansas City local, coughing and wheezing its way out of the rock and acorn country of the Upper Ozarks, brought with it the Reverend Walter

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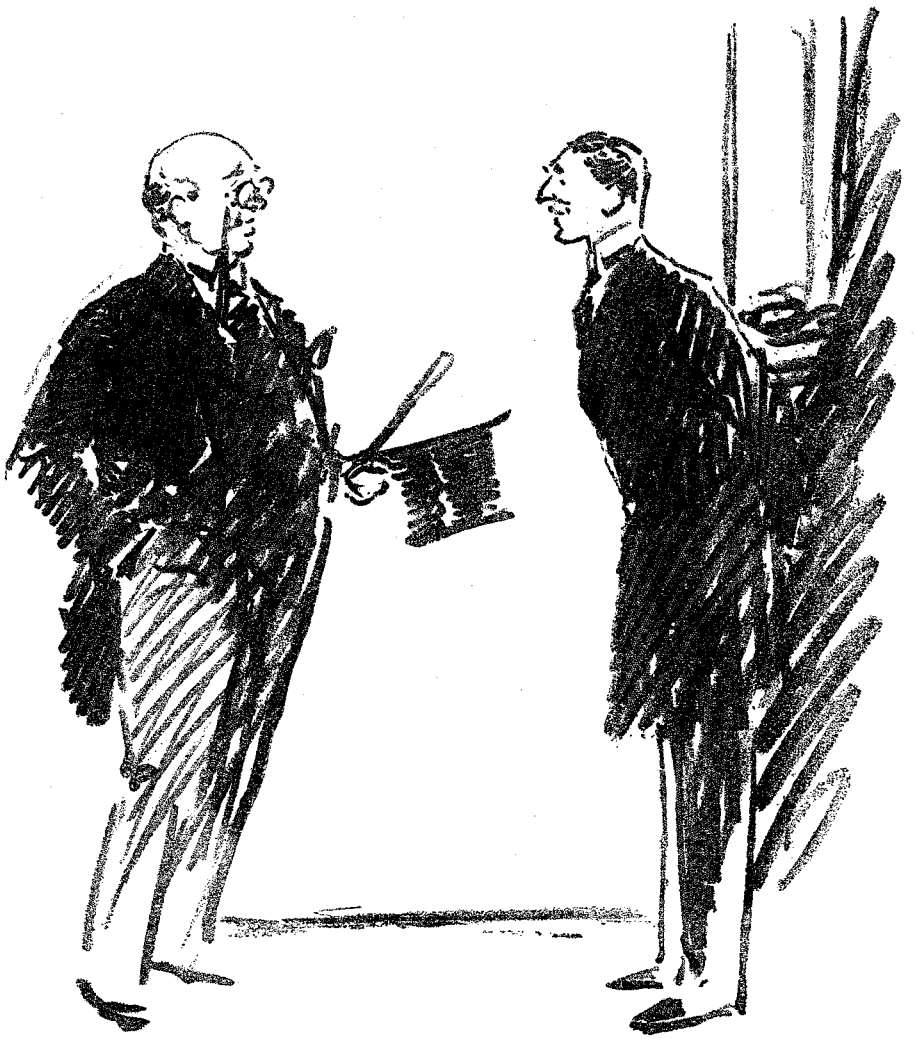
Hayes. In a smoking-car he sat, as unshaven and roughly dressed as his lounging friend, Tom Wilson, opposite him. He smiled with the contentment of a man who has made himself master of his subject and can speak with authority.



"A straight-from-the-shoulder talk you gave us."—Page 180.

Critically he glanced over the men in the smoking-car. 'One in a hundred is a habitual criminal,' he reflected. 'There might easily be one in here. If so, it would be interesting to detect him.'

The Reverend Hayes did not worry about what he would do with a criminally inclined individual in case he discovered one. But luckily such a decision was not necessary. He closely scrutinized the features and expression of each person in the car and allowed their criminal tendencies to pass as not dangerous. The four ragged fellows with lean brown faces and long hair did look rather suspicious, but then half the natives of the Linn Hill country looked a good deal like them.

This amusement failing, he reached for a two-day-old newspaper. For a few minutes his attention focussed on an item

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that had fitted in coincidently with his paramount thoughts. It read:

JEWEL ROBBERY AT WARSAW

ESCAPED CONVICT HOLDS UP CONRAD AND JONES FOR $10,000.00.

A daring robber, whose description answers to that of Charlie "Snake" Plevins, recently escaped from the State Penitentiary, looted the store of Conrad and Jones during the noon hour to-day.

He entered the store with the apparent intention of purchasing a ring. As soon as the store was clear of customers, he pointed a revolver at Mr. Jones, who was alone.

After tying and gagging his victim, he locked him in a closet. The casual robber then selected $10,000.00 worth of readily salable jewelry and made his escape.

Etc., etc.

"What do you think of that, Tom?" Hayes asked, passing over the paper.

Tom Wilson yawned and read the item leisurely. "Nice work," he commented dryly.

"How stupid people are!" Hayes mused.

"Not so stupid," said Tom, "when they can escape from the penitentiary and pull off a clean ten-thousand-dollar job within a month."

"Think of it," Hayes continued, ignoring him. "A man lets a notorious criminal walk into his store, stand around for half an hour or so at broad noon, and then lets himself be locked up in a closet, so that the chap can sort over his stock of jewelry at leisure and walk off with it."

"Don't blame the jeweller just because he hasn't your scientific knowledge," drawled Tom with half a smile.

"It is the duty of the average man to know something about lawbreakers," answered Hayes. "You should know by this time that the ignorance and laxness on the part of the average man is at the root of the trouble. That is going to be the key-note of my sermon."

"Yes, I guess the people in your church that will have to sit through that speech of yours to-morrow and learn about lawbreakers don't know how lucky they are," yawned Tom, settling back in his seat to doze.

'If I get there by to-morrow!' thought Hayes, having his attention brought back for a moment to the toiling train. But he was not in a worrying mood. His eyes wandered out the window to the small fields of foot-high corn and patches of green-headed wheat reposing in the afternoon sunshine. Evidently the train was working out of the heavily wooded and unfertile Ozarks.

He settled back in his seat to inculcate the lesson of the Warsaw robbery into his sermon. It was a pleasure to work over this sermon. The facts were knit together with a strength and reality that could come into being only under the rough interchange of ideas, between men of the world, between men of the world under the influence of the camp and the open air. 'Yes,' Hayes mused to himself, 'I must plan to keep always out among people so that I will know all kinds, and my ideas will continue to be fresh and vigorous.' Smilingly he contemplated the pleasant future of keeping his mind clear for the benefit of the Broadway Church congregation. The sunlit fields and woods sparkled with unusual beauty. Even the hammering of the toiling local was rhythmic and musical to his ears.

But there is a variously stated adage meaning "The brightest sun is just before the storm." With a long groan the train drew to a stop. Hayes looked quickly out the window. There was no station or crossroad, nor even a switch. They had just settled down, as if overcome by the effort of the long grind, between a scrub-oak hillside and a field of sorghum-cane.

"Now what!" he exclaimed.

"Maybe the engineer saw an old friend in the field," suggested Tom.

The conductor came strolling through the car.

"What's the matter now?" asked Hayes in an irritated voice.

"I don't know. Reckon there's some trouble up at the engine. I'm going up to find out about it," answered the conductor.

"Are we very late, now?"

"About forty minutes to an hour, so far."

"But I have to catch the limited in Cole's Junction at six-thirty. I must get into Globe City to-night," emphasized Hayes desperately.

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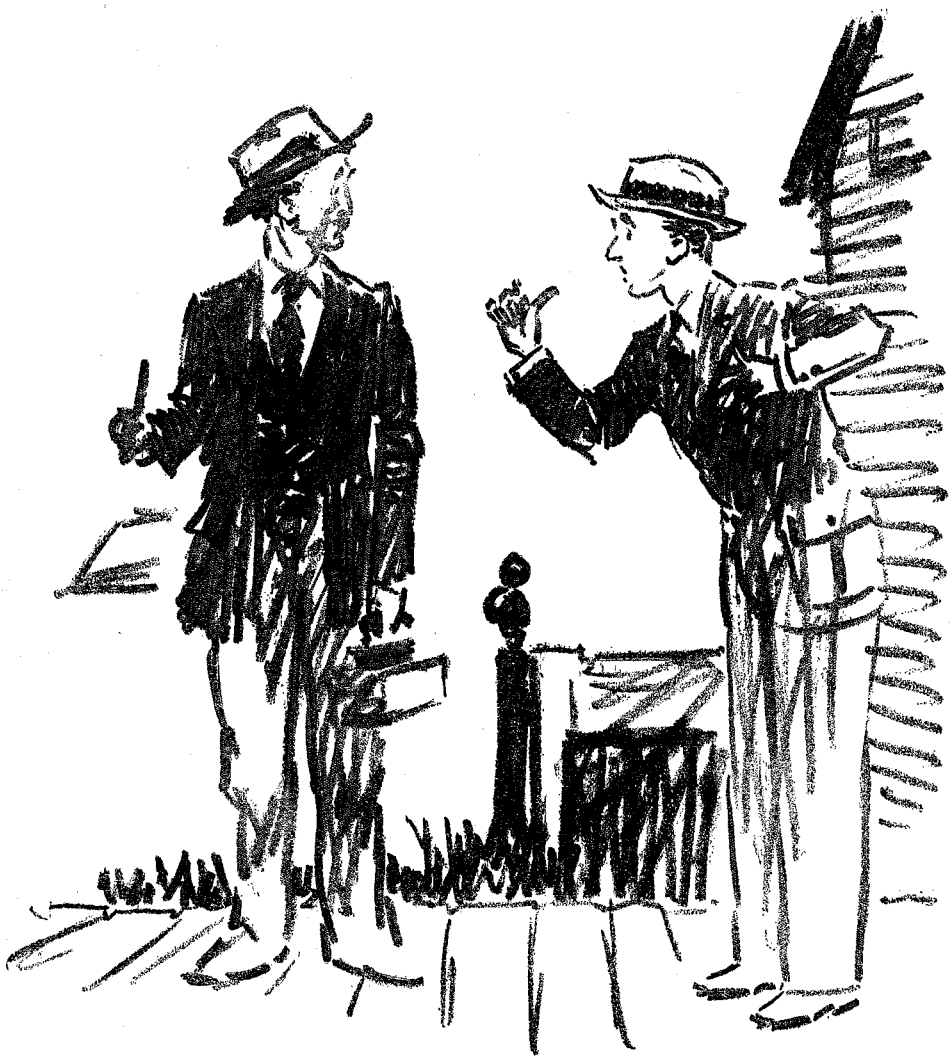
The conductor thoughtfully took a chew of tobacco. "Well, we may make it all right. Depends on how we get along." And he strolled away.

"It must be pretty bad, doc," said Tom, amused.

Hayes looked again at his watch. The minutes dragged on. The dormant train



The station-master locked up and turned to go home.—Page 186.

"It'll be too bad if you don't get to say your speech to-morrow, doc," sympathized Tom Wilson, throwing away his cigarette to give attention to the difficulty on hand.

"Too bad! I've got to get there. Why in the world did I take a chance on this damn train!"

gave no sign of life, except the occasional hisses from the engine. The scrub-oak hillside and the field of sorghum-cane—so peaceful and so quiet—took on a hateful, mocking look. Finally, at the end of an hour, the engine rose to heroic efforts and chugged away, dragging its four cars bumping after it.

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The rattles and jerks were no longer cheerful—they were deliberate and insulting reminders of the painful progress of the train. At each mile-post Hayes dried his hands on a handkerchief and looked at his watch. Slowly the mile-posts were left behind and rapidly the sun sank in the sky.

"Only ten miles to the Junction, now," encouraged the conductor on one of his trips through the car.

At the end of another half-hour the local creaked to a stop. Hayes ran out onto the station platform and gleaned the sad information from a departing baggageman, who hurried on his way. The limited had come and gone. The rails of the main line came together in the distance—silent and undisturbed. Two portly women and a stooped old man walked away down the rutted street, carrying their baskets and straw suitcases. The local struggled away on its trip to Kansas City, and Cole's Junction settled down to peaceful rest. It was supper-time, attended with a pervading quiet that left the outside world a hopeless distance away.

The station-master locked up the ticket-office and turned to go home.

"Is there any possible way that I can get in to Globe City before nine o'clock to-morrow?" Hayes asked him desperately.

"There's a train that will put you in there around twelve. I reckon that'll be soon enough," grunted the station-master. 'Another one of those fellows that are always het up to get somewhere right on the dot,' he thought to himself. 'To-morrow is Sunday anyway,' he reflected further and turned to go.

"Is there a freight-train?" asked Hayes in desperation. He recoiled at the idea of riding in a caboose, but he could endure it.

"Yes, there's one through here in a couple of hours, only they ain't allowed to carry passengers," and the station-master walked off to supper.

The topmost segment of the red sun dropped behind a distant hill, reflecting its glow on a fleecy cloud. Three freight-cars standing on a deserted track bore a sad and homeless look. From the stock-pens across the tracks a sentimental steer bawled out his lonesome woes. A barn on the distant hill faded from view. The evening star came out sparkling—brilliant. Not far from it the young moon showed a clear-cut crescent against the blue sky. Up and down the platform Hayes walked. The darkness deepened and the other stars came out. A boy lit the lights around the station and walked away. Back on the main street a delayed Ford could be heard chugging out of town. Then silence settled over all.

Hayes walked miserably up to where the two lines of tracks crossed and looked around him as if he hoped that a train would suddenly materialize to carry him home. A disagreeable breeze stirred the dark night air. Wretchedly he wandered around over the tracks. Two men in ragged overalls brushed by him as they walked toward a standing freight-car. "Hoboes," muttered Hayes to himself, "or maybe fugitives from justice," he added, thinking suddenly of the Warsaw jewel robbery. He felt perceptibly cold around his stomach and walked back to the lighted platform in front of the station. There was a man there, sitting on a keg. Hayes utilized an empty chicken-coop and sat down near by.

The man watched him curiously with steady gray eyes. He was not an unusual person except that his under jaw extended forward and downward, running into a large heavy chin. He wore a khaki shirt with the collar turned up and serviceable pants. Hayes lowered his eyes from the man's steady gaze and amused sneer.

He tried to think out his troubles and dropped his head in his hands. He could almost hear the church-bell ringing at 9.15 Sunday morning. Vividly he saw the men's class assembling for their morning lesson, expecting to have a general discussion on the crime wave, before the sermon. They look around surprised.

"Where is the minister?" asks Judge Howard. Nobody knows.

"Maybe he didn't get back from that fishing-trip," suggests Mr. Landis. A general murmur of displeasure rises from the men.

"He doesn't seem to be much interested in getting this church," remarks Mr. Plover. Nobody denies it.

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"Probably he will be here in time for church," interposes Mr. Landis, and the class lamely proceeds.

Hayes groaned at the horrible thought but he could not get the vision from before his eyes. Now the church is filling up with expectant, thoughtful people. They sit primly waiting for the morning sermon. The organ plays and plays—but no minister. They grow restless. The organ finally stops and a buzzing murmur of questions fills the room. Finally they get up and leave in little groups, uttering their surprise and displeasure.

Hayes was nauseated with the sickening thought.

Some one was in the ticket-office now. The telegraph instruments were clicking. 'I'll have to telegraph them,' thought Hayes. 'Probably they can get some one else to preach the sermon. Yes, they'll get some one else for good! Oh, Lord! I've lost the place just when I was about to have it definitely settled.'

Hoboes maybe?

The man on the keg struck a match. Hayes looked up. He was drawing complacently on a cigarette with that same amused, sarcastic look around the drooping end of his mouth, and with a disinterested stare in his eyes.

'He looks like a self-sufficient chap—perhaps he can help me,' thought Hayes to himself.

"Nice evening," he said sadly, with an effort toward politeness, by way of starting the conversation.

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"I've seen worse," the man answered dryly.

"Which way are you going?" Hayes continued.

The man looked at him steadily for a moment. "Oh, I'm working up the line," he grunted, indicating the direction of Globe City with his thumb.

"I'm going that way too—Globe City," said Hayes. "I've simply got to be there by eight o'clock in the morning and I've missed my train. I don't know what I am going to do."

The man drew deeply from his cigarette and transferred his attention to the rings and spirals of smoke without so much as nodding. Hayes was irritated by the discourtesy, but he was desperate. He rose, walked up and down the platform a few times, and returned to sit on his chicken-coop.

"Can you suggest any way that I can get in to Globe City before eight o'clock in the morning?" he interposed doggedly.

The man looked up surprised, as if just remembering his presence. "Well, I aim to be past Globe City by then," he said at last.

He walked over to a standing box-car.—Page 189.

"How's that?" asked Hayes quickly.

"There's a hot-shot through here in an hour or so," the man answered in a bored voice, turning his attention back to the floating smoke.

"A hot-shot?"

"Yes, a through freight," he explained in an irritated tone.

"But they don't carry passengers," suggested Hayes, anxious to sound the depth of any hope.

The man turned, giving Hayes full attention at last. "Say, partner, you are either dumb as hell or you haven't been around much," he rasped out.

Hayes frowned. This was a biting remark to one whose very worldliness had been a recommendation to the Broadway Church.

The man continued willingly enough, now, emphasizing his words sarcastically. "You don't introduce yourself to the conductor and ask his lief to ride." He threw down the cigarette. "Where there's a freight, there's box-cars—see? Maybe there'll be some empties, and you can get inside and go to sleep. If there ain't, there's lots of room on top and a little ladder at the end of each car. If you ain't crippled, you might climb up there—see?"

"I'm not a hobo," Hayes snapped and walked away. "Steal a ride!" he exclaimed disgustedly to himself.

From the office came the clicking of the telegraph instrument. 'I must send that telegram!' The sickening realization came back like a shock. 'Whom will I send it to? Judge Howard? Oh, no! Mr. Landis? Of course not! And how can the thing be worded?' He walked desperately back and forth. "It is terrible," he groaned, and fled out on to the tracks until he could no longer hear the mocking clicks of the instrument.

It was cooler out there. The settling moon and the stars shone down on the silent rails. There was something even friendly about them. The heavy-chinned man strolled under the station light, unconcerned. 'He doesn't

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look like a hobo, but then they say those that bum on the trains are different,' mused Hayes. 'How easy it is for that fellow to get anywhere! He may be in Globe City or perhaps as far as St. Louis by eight o'clock to-morrow morning.'

Hayes's fists clinched; he felt less helpless and wondered why. He walked over to a standing box-car. A very simple thing it looked, standing there in the pale light. It might have been a shed of some kind. He took hold of the ladder and climbed up to the top. 'Any fool could ride up here,' he reflected, looking along the large, almost flat, top of the car. He had always supposed that bums rode on rods underneath. He sat down and drew a long refreshing breath. It cleared the poison of worry from his body and mind. His nerves ached to be on the move as he sat there, but his mind was exhilarated with this unexplainable lifting of its load.

Off in the distance came a wailing whistle sending a thrill through his body. Hayes listened with pounding heart. A few silent minutes dragged by and then a louder whistle shrieked. From far down the track flashed the powerful headlight of an engine. A faint murmur came through the night air, gathering in volume like a rising wind. The silent rails began to sing. Hayes's breath came short and hard. He climbed down from the car as he saw men from the freight-room start his way with swinging lanterns. He ran toward a more deeply shadowed car. His complacent friend was there before him, sitting on a box and smoking as usual.

The murmur became a roar, louder and louder. A long sweep of track showed up clear as daylight. Hayes's nerves leaped with excitement.

"Are you going to catch this train?" he asked inanely.

"Yes," came the answer, and he felt encouraged.

The roar grew louder still and then began to die down as the huge headlight coasted nearer. The rumble of the wheels and the banging together of the cars mingled with the slow coughs and clanging bell of the engine. Suddenly the huge black bulk loomed up from behind

He climbed to the top—any fool could do it.

its flooding headlight. The bumping cars followed, slower and slower. And finally, with loud creaks and long groans, the freight-train stopped.

Excitedly Hayes watched the men running back and forth with lanterns. It seemed an interminable time. He could hear the engine moving up at the front of the train. It was backing toward him. It ground by on the next track and slammed into the car that Hayes had recently deserted. With deliberate snorts it started hissing and dripping back, like some monster with its prey, sounding the bell as a warning to others. The light from the fire-box blazed out menacingly as the huge black thing towered over his hiding-place. It growled swiftly on its way back to the front of the train. Never before had Hayes been steeped in the spirit and mystery of the road. Impatiently he watched the idle cars. Now a

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shiver rattled through the train; the engine had hooked on. Slowly the cars began to move. A man with a swinging lantern hurried by. The way was clear. Hayes looked at his companion. He was casually throwing away his cigarette and watching the train. It gathered speed.

A man with a swinging lantern hurried by.

"Aren't you going to get on?" asked Hayes in a low, jumping voice.

"Yes—make that car in front of the oil-cars."

Hayes ran across the tracks for his car. The train was rolling into a rhythmic, rumbling speed. He swung up on the ladder, hung there in the shadow for a minute as he felt the rapid acceleration of the train. He climbed to the top; it was very simple indeed. He drew a deep breath as the wind whipped through his clothes, and his heart pounded with elation. Far behind, the lights of the Junction sparkled prettily. The train bounded through the countryside, looking like a long serpent under the starlight. Occasionally the engine, far up ahead, emitted a red flare of light and the smoke rolled back in a long spiral.

Farmers' houses, some dark and sleeping, others with soft lights in the windows, flashed by. A white road ran along by the track. Straggling automobiles followed their headlights, ambling along insignificantly. The huge black bulk of a grain-elevator, with several little houses around it, loomed up suddenly, and then faded back into the darkness, leaving only the blinking signal-lights to mark the spot. Woods-patches and fields passed by mysteriously dark. Small streams of water sparkled with the reflected light of the sky, and on the horizon the crescent moon hung low.

From between the cars came occasional glimpses of the flashing rails. The crushing wheels of the train ground over them, only a few feet below. The mild sense of danger was exhilarating. He looked back toward the caboose, whence could come the only other source of danger. A lantern appeared swinging along the top of the train. Hayes's companion walked up from another car, seeming extremely careless in moving about. He kneeled down by Hayes's side.

"That's a dick back there," he said.

"A dick?"

"Yes, a railroad detective. He ain't likely to come past the oil-cars; if he does, hide under that little platform at the end of the car."

For the first time since they had started, it occurred to Hayes that he was breaking the law. "What'll he do if he catches us?" he said hollowly.

"Might make us jump. They're getting hard along this road now."

Hayes looked down at the flashing roadbed with its deep ditches on either side, sensed the speed of the roaring train, and held his breath. But the lantern came only as far as the oil-cars. Their position was well chosen. The lantern retreated to the caboose, and its disap-

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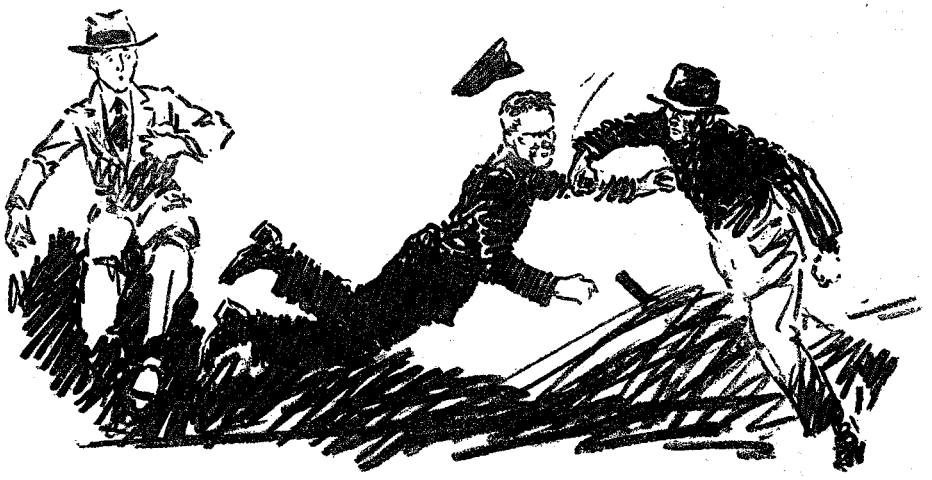
pearance was a signal of victory. The train flew on through the night, and Hayes's spirit rose higher than ever. His companion sat with his back to him, silent and still.

"Rather decent chap," said Hayes to himself. "I see how this life might hold a man"; then smiled elated as he realized how he was being broadened, literally overnight. This would prove valuable in future practical sermons to an impressed Globe City congregation.

At Vernon and then at Hillsborough they stopped. At each place they hid carefully, and for Hayes thrillingly, until the train moved on again. Neither "bulls," "dicks," nor "brakies" disturbed them. Globe City next.

Hayes walked up and down the top of the car. "It's actually easy," he remarked to himself. He stretched his arms in the whipping wind and throbbed with a feeling of wild, indomitable freedom. The bounding serpent of a train swept through the starlit night, and, like its master, he bestrode it. The time passed quickly. The dark, mysterious countryside seemed ever new and enchanting. Each little village as it popped by was an adventure. Off in the distance he saw the reflection of water. They must cross Flat River soon and then would be only a few miles from Globe City. He looked back, watching the caboose as it desperately endeavored to keep up, and smiled. Something slapped him on the back of the head and shoulders. That was puzzling.

"Duck," growled his companion, and fairly jerked him to the boards, as overhead the heavy black beams of the low bridge flashed cruelly by. "When you feel those things slap you, you want to flop down. They are there to warn you of the bridge—see," the man cautioned.



His foot shot out—the virile fist of the catlike man drove into the policeman.—Page 192.

Hayes sighed with relief and they sat together with their feet hanging over the end of the car. The spirit of brotherhood does not always require conversation or formal introductions for its sustenance. Hayes drew out his pipe, and his heavy-chinned friend lit a cigarette. They rode on contentedly.

Along the sky-line glowed at last the light that was Globe City. Almost home and triumphant! Nearer and nearer they sped. Then the individual lights began to shine out. Rounding a curve, they gazed on the whole sparkling hillside as they bore down upon it. The dark houses began to be closer together, with the occasional street-lamps of the outskirts.

"Now, bo, we've got to be damn careful here, especially from bulls," said the silent man.

"Right you are," replied Hayes, mentally girding himself for the last necessary effort.

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They passed a semi-business street with a crossing bell ringing. More tracks appeared on either side and they entered the freight-yards. Quickly they climbed down in the shadow at the end of their car as the glaring lights lit up everything. Idle steaming engines and rows of freight-cars were on either side. They drew back when they passed close to a man with a lantern. The cars began to bang together as the train slowed down.

"Here at last!" Hayes could have shouted in his joy.

Across a span of tracks lay a shadowed freight-car. Hayes's friend swung cautiously to the ground; Hayes followed. They ran to get across the open tracks before the "dicks" and brakemen on the caboose should pass near. It was less shadowed behind the car than they had expected.

"Wait a minute!" came an authoritative voice. They stopped cold. A policeman stepped in front of them. Hayes felt a horrible, crushing sickness come over him. Before his mind flashed a picture of talking people, hundreds of them, horrified over Preacher Hayes being arrested as a common "bum." His fists clinched with the very direness of the predicament.

"What are you fellows doing here?" growled the policeman as he advanced a step.

Hayes's friend was calm and tense as a cat crouching for the spring.

The officer flashed a light in his face. "What the ——," he exclaimed, leaping forward raising his club.

But he did not leap far. Hayes's foot shot out, throwing him off his balance for the sufficient moment. The virile fist of the catlike man drove into the policeman's chin and dropped him with a thud.

Two figures dashed into the shadows of the warehouse and disappeared separately under the protecting gloom of a deserted alley.

Eight o'clock Sunday morning. The sun smiled down with the mildness of May, the birds chirped in the green trees, and distant church-bells tolled cheerfully. In a sunny breakfast-room, fanned by the cool breeze of a May morning, sat the Reverend Walter Hayes—hair perfectly combed, immaculate in his snug collar, dark tie, and tailored frock coat. He unrolled the Sunday paper and selected the news section, as he leisurely ate his grapefruit. His eye fell on a head-line—he read quickly on:

WARSAW JEWEL THIEF ELUDES POLICE HERE

Charlie (Snake) Plevins, escaped convict and believed by the police to be guilty of the Warsaw robbery, was recognized by Patrolman Michaels here last night.

With a companion he attacked the policeman suddenly, knocking him unconscious, and escaped.

Etc., etc.

The Reverend Hayes handed the paper to his wife with a deep sigh. "Ignorance—ignorance—ignorance," he said wearily. "How blind and stupid people are! This ruffian has been running free for a month; he has probably been seen by hundreds of people who should have had the intelligence and training to recognize in him the earmarks of a crook. But they let him go on unaccosted. He robs jewelry stores and escapes; there is no one to stop him. With one of his gang he is recognized here in Globe City and yet goes cheerfully on his way. Perhaps he is walking our streets at this very minute and the police and citizens blindly let him pass."

Suddenly the face of the minister lit up with triumph. "There is the illustration that will bring my sermon home to them. That will impress upon them the crying need for intelligent understanding of crimes and criminals."

Smiling he thought over this powerful addition to an already impressive and masterful sermon, a sermon that should be followed by many more of equal value to the welfare of the community.

'Theories and dogmas must give way to practical facts and knowledge,' he mused, and returned to his breakfast with the care-free confidence of one whose future is assured.

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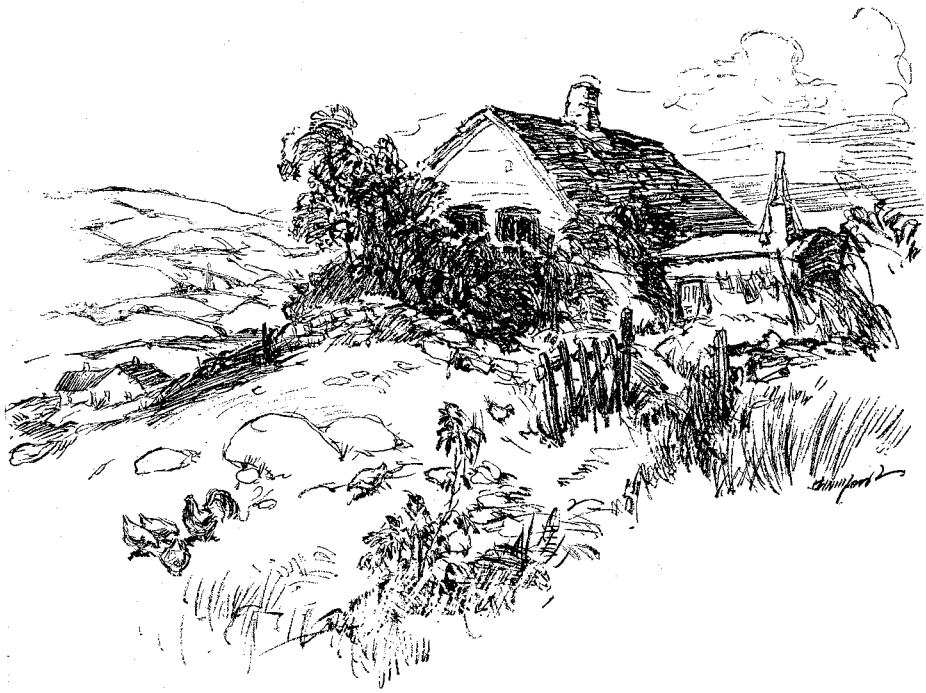

# Zinnias

BY LILLIAN MAYFIELD ROBERTS

ILLUSTRATIONS BY L. F. WILFORD

I HADN'T thought of Old Jane Crowe for years until after my daughter Alice's marriage. Oh, I had remembered her once in a while—mental flash-backs—at the sight of a bed of bright flowers, or when something called up pictures of the folks in Stony Valley. You know—at the smell of leaf-mould, shady woods full of trilliums; at the whiff of smoke, camp-fires along a quiet river where wood-thrushes sing in the evening. That's how I remember Old Jane; and with her, of course, Stony Valley and the West Virginia village, looking, from the hilltops, like a toy town set up by a child in the bend of a toy river: two church spires, pointing; white houses and lots of trees full of warblers in April; a bridge like a spider-web across the narrow place in the river where the shell of the old mill stood ready to topple on the rocks below. Of course, I didn't see Stony Valley like that when I lived there. I didn't see it at all. It just was.

Why the blank months following Alice's marriage should have brought back Old Jane must be one of those mental corkscrews in which psychoanalysts glory; for there was no apparent connection. Neither was there between revivals and Old Jane's zinnias, so far as I could see then. Now I know better.

You have noticed when a great tree falls in the forest how lacy little bushes spring up almost overnight to fill the gap? The tree is gone, but Nature does not sit down and cry about it. She fills in quickly with something else. I think that is the way it was with Old Jane's zinnias; and I often wonder if the little lacy bushes ever completely filled the gap. I don't



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know. My own growth has been struggling. I don't care for bridge or clubs; I am not interested in politics. This spring I have taken to tramping the woods with field-glasses and bird guides, and to planting choke-cherries and barberry in my garden. I have put in a lot of time, pleasantly, that way.

On my neighbor's barn is a rusty old weathercock that has always pointed north. There was a bad storm last night, and this morning the weathercock is turning in every direction—groping, bewildered. The thing that held it so long has broken. I feel rather sorry for it. In time, I suppose, it will get used to turning. Just now it seems a little dizzy.

I know how it feels. I think, too, I know at last about Old Jane's zinnias.

Every one wondered why Old Jane, that spring twenty-five years ago, started to grow flowers; not a bed of zinnias, as most folks grow them, a background for fragrant and less intense flowers, but a riot of zinnias: all about the house and around the vegetable garden; up the steep hillside back of the house to flare like irregular slaps of paint against the green woods; and clear down to the road—orange and red and yellow in all tints and shadings, like spilled rainbows.

I couldn't have been much more than fifteen the first summer of the zinnias, and I remember telling mother about them and saying that it must have rained zinnia seed on Old Jane's place, as the poet says about roses. I added too, as fifteen would, that a few zinnias in a copper bowl were really quite artistic; but all zinnias—nothing but zinnias—impossible! They slapped you in the face. They screamed at you. You could do nothing but stop and stare.

And every one did. Even now I can remember the feeling they gave me. I still like zinnias—a few in a copper bowl. I like sunflowers, too, their round bonneted faces peeping over a wall. But I should not like an entire garden of sunflowers.

Anyhow, zinnias and Old Jane Crowe didn't go together, and it was hard for me to change my picture of her. I had always connected her with revivals.

You may not know revivals. They are old-fashioned. But we had them in Stony Valley, and people looked forward to them, winter after winter, much as the city music-lover looks forward to his opera. They were the high light in a shaded picture.

We went. Every one did except my father, a lawyer, who could not find a personal place for them in his logical mind, and my mother, a New Englander, neither emotional nor orthodox. Mother's father, a minister, had changed churches and creeds with the greatest ease when his congregation had objected to his dealing in cattle as a side-line. So orthodoxy and revivals did not run in the family, and I was slightly contemptuous of them, and of shouting and of Old Jane.

I was a little afraid of her as a child and used to scamper through the gate when I saw her coming up the steep hill road that began with our house as Main Street and went on past the grocery and the courthouse and the blacksmith's shop in the bend of Stony River, there to become road again and wander through scattered houses back into the hills.

Old Jane's home, not far from the blacksmith's shop, was a dilapidated two-room cottage, almost hidden from sight by lilacs and mock oranges so tall and so rank that the upper sashes of the windows seemed like furtive eyes peering out over their tops. Between the lilacs and the road was a long open stretch sloping down to the river, that, before the zinnias, was a tangled mass of clover and blue grass and clumps of yellow daisies. Old Jane lived alone, an unsocial creature with a wrinkled brown face and eyes so dark that the pupil merged with the iris into a smoky expressionless whole. She was very small, and she wore long skirts that trailed, muddy, in the back, and over her head a light-colored shawl that threw her dark face into unpleasant relief. I don't know how she managed to live. She wove rag rugs that people bought sometimes, but that couldn't have kept her. She had chickens, but so did every one else. Some said she had relatives in Virginia who sent her money. Maybe she did. None of them ever showed up in Stony Valley.

She came to town rarely: Saturdays, with a basket of eggs to trade at the stores; Sundays, to sit at the rear of the

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church and slip out creakily before the benediction, to avoid, I suppose, those friendly pauses and chats along the aisles and in the vestibules. I used to wonder why she came at all. She was so old and shabby, and she had no friends. What did she get out of church, anyhow?

But I had forgotten the revivals.

It's strange how church services stick in our memories: spring Sundays with the windows open, daffodils by the pulpit, a lost bee darting about and angrily blaming every one for his own blunder; and perhaps a song-sparrow so close to the window that the voice of the minister is accompanied by spasmodic tinkles of music; winter nights, during a revival; every seat filled and rows of boys standing in the back; the air too hot and a baby fretting somewhere. Revivals—and Old Jane Crowe crouched over a stove in the corner, her blank eyes fixed on the evangelist.

I won't try to describe a revival. If you have seen one, all right. If you haven't, you can't understand how the evangelist, with his fear of God and his threats of eternal punishment, usually by fire, and his stories of sinners cut off in the flower of their sin—how all this can rouse a crowd to the point of hysteria. But it can. Even the songs, monotonous, almost chanted, help. You have to see it to understand. The tension either breaks or eases. When it eases there's a dull spot. It always comes, sometimes early, sometimes late.

She came to town rarely: Saturdays, with a basket of eggs to trade at the stores.—Page 194.

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It was for this spot that Old Jane waited.

She did wait. Night after night passed and she sat motionless. I know, for I kept an uneasy eye upon her so I could slip farther over in the seat when she started down the aisle. I did not like shouting. It had become one of the lost arts in our community, with every one but Old Jane. People used to do it, father said, but they didn't any more. It terrified me as a child. It disgusted me as I grew older, and I never lost my distrust of an aisle seat as long as Old Jane shouted. I felt that I could not stay where she might touch me; that I could not have endured even the brush of her clothes as she passed.

It was much the same feeling as that I now have about the insane. Pity—yes; but more an intangible sensation of helplessness. Have you ever tried to talk over a telephone when the wire is down? That is the feeling. The invisible lines reaching out from you to them will no longer carry a message. There is no contact. You know—that quick flash when another mind meets yours, silently sometimes. Just contact.

I felt that way about her then. I don't believe I should now. Looking back, I am sure that the lack of contact was in me, not her.

Old Jane was not an ordinary shouter. I realized that. She did not scream nor wring her hands nor make a fool of herself generally. I can't tell you just how she did it, but there was a difference; a touch of drama, perhaps, instead of hysteria; unsuspected richness of voice; and when she had finished, a hush, like that which follows the big scene in the second act of a play.

I can see her now, walking up and down the aisles, her eyes like banked coals—glow without flame—her face lighted somehow, inside, as when a lamp shines through a drawn blind. You have seen houses like that: blinds down, lights inside. Maybe you have walked slowly past, wondering who lives there and what they are doing behind the blinds. Perhaps you have painted a picture of them nicer than the one they actually make.

Well that was Old Jane. I feel now that she did not see us, packed tight in the hot room; that she followed a sort of mirage reflected from some unknown oasis in her own character, and that following it she gained something we did not see. Perhaps I am wrong. It is easy to imagine things so long after.

It was disappointing that she did not stay that way. I did not like her shouting, but it seemed to suit her better than the drab shawl and the basket of eggs. Surfaces so rarely fit. The cat-bird hides a fighter's soul beneath his modest suit of Quaker gray, and the scarlet tanager, who loves deep woods and quiet, flaunts a crimson jacket with bold black sleeves.

I thought it a very good idea when the new minister announced one Sunday that instead of the usual revival there would be sermons by himself and special music by the choir. Of course it caused a row in the church, and a few of the members went over to the Baptists. It was discussed in the grocery-store and argued on the street corners. There was a meeting of the church-members and talk of asking the young minister to resign. But it was his first charge and they didn't.

I agreed with him entirely. I had just joined the choir. It did not worry me that so many of the old members left. Their ideas did not affect me. Neither had my mother's when I had insisted on new furniture for the living-room. As I said before, I was fifteen, the age of replacement, and by some strange transformation all the things I knew intimately had become cheap and tawdry. I had grown up with revivals just as I had with the living-room furniture, and it was proper that both should go.

I did not think of Old Jane. She had been little but a shadow to most of us, anyhow. So when she quit coming to church few missed her. I thought she showed good sense. There was to be no revival. She couldn't shout during a sermon with special music by the choir. Shouting was all she did. Why come?

That spring was the beginning of the zinnias, and they were a sensation.

Did you ever come suddenly upon a gorgeous moth slowly waving his new-grown wings in the sunshine? A luxurious velvet creature just out of the drab cocoon that has hung by your door all winter? Then you know how we felt about the zinnias.

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*From a drawing by L. F. Wilford.*

I remember that the ice frozen between the door and the step cracked and gave suddenly as I pushed against the knob.—Page 198.



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We like moths better if we have watched them come out of their cocoons; their beauty is so startling, and it ties them up, somehow, with reality. Cocoons, you can handle. Moth wings lose their velvet when you touch them.

It says much for Old Jane that no one asked her about the zinnias. Instead we strolled past with quick self-conscious glances, avoiding a direct look at the window where the curtains moved and parted. When the church gave a social for new members the wife of the Sunday-school superintendent suggested that some one go and ask Old Jane for some of her zinnias to bank about the altar-rail. But she did not offer to go herself, and there were no volunteers. The rail was decorated with golden-glow.

We did not talk about it, but I think there was a general relief when the frost came and took the zinnias. There were so many of them.

I suppose I was not the only one who watched for them the next spring, though no one mentioned it. Thinking of the zinnias I watched for Old Jane too, and came to realize that I had not seen her for weeks. I mentioned this to my mother and her New England conscience suggested that I walk to school past Old Jane's house and look for her. And though there was a sharp wind cutting through the sunshine and waving the new green of the willows along the river, there was no smoke coming from Old Jane's chimney.

I went home, too, by way of the river. The wind took my breath as I passed the blacksmith's shop, and still there was no smoke from Old Jane's chimney. I didn't stop to decide what I should do. If I had stopped I should not have done anything. I opened the gate that hung sagging on one hinge, walked up the path between the dead zinnias, and knocked at the door.

I had to go in finally without an answer, and I remember that the ice frozen between the door and the step cracked and gave suddenly as I pushed against the knob. The room was almost dark, and I stood for a minute, my heart pounding, while the things about me took shape and moved out a little from the dusk that blurred them: a table, draped with an old chenille cover tapestried in birds and roses; a low rocker; a chest of drawers by the window; and in the darkest corner a bed with Old Jane huddled upon it.

She was too sick to resent me, but her eyes were unfriendly, and they followed me back and forth as I dragged wood from the lean-to kitchen and worked clumsily to start a blaze in the fireplace. It was the only thing I knew how to do, and the house was so cold.

I ran all the way home, looking back over my shoulder, rushed into the kitchen, and locked the door safely behind me. I was glad afterward that there had been no one in the kitchen to see me.

Father walked out the road after supper and sent "Doc" Andrews over to Old Jane's. He came back in less than an hour and he and mother talked for a long time in the living-room. I heard him say impatiently that some one would have to look after her, as she had no folks, and when mother came out and started to pack a basket, I knew that the some one was going to be mother. That is one of the penalties for having a New England conscience. Mother did not care a rap, personally, for Old Jane, but she did care for her responsibilities.

From that evening mother and I took care of her: swept the old rag carpet and washed the curtains; scrubbed the kitchen and put clean newspapers on the cupboard shelves; and I every morning on my way to school, brought a basket of food and set it on a chair by Old Jane's bed. If she noticed and appreciated our trouble she did not show it. She was quite helpless. As for me, propinquity had changed her, as it does most ogresses, into a weak and harmless old woman, and all my fear of her had died in that first terrified evening.

At first I was impatient at the bother she caused me, and wondered why some one else couldn't help take care of her—the wife of the Sunday-school superintendent, who talked so much of her religion, or even Miss Oliver, my teacher. When I complained to mother, she just looked at me, and I didn't mention it any more.

As the days passed and the willows grew greener and lacier along the banks of the river, I stopped at Old Jane's every

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Wrapped in a gray blanket, she sat all day peering out through the curtains.

morning as a matter of course and helped her to a rocking-chair by the window, where, wrapped in a gray blanket, she sat all day peering out through the curtains. And in the evening I stopped again and helped her back into bed. I could have carried her, she was so thin and frail. But I didn't. It would have seemed an insult. Otherwise I rather think I managed her with a high hand. I had discovered her, saved her life, in a way, and though I had never heard of the oriental custom in such matters, I can easily see how it should have come about. For, after my first resentment, I rather enjoyed my job. And Old Jane came to belong to me as definitely as though I had created her that cold spring evening.



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How she felt about it did not worry me. I was too much wrapped up in my own reactions. Thinking of it now, it seems almost pitiful. What must have gone on in Old Jane's lonely heart during that illness! An ingrown, embittered woman left helpless in the hands of a complacent girl, who may have pleased—who knows?—by her very arrogance.

She had changed a lot, too. I saw that. Once she asked me to bring a little trunk that she kept under her bed, and opening it she took out a beautiful old lace scarf, yellow and soft, a brooch made of a large black stone holding in its centre a tiny diamond, and a picture of herself when she was a girl, wearing the scarf. I asked her carelessly who it was, and felt embarrassed when she told me. She seemed surprised that I had not known at once. The girl was quite pretty. Later Old Jane gave me the scarf. I put it on and posed before her, laughing, and she dropped her face in her hands and cried. I couldn't imagine why, but I knew that I had in some way caused it, and was very quiet the rest of the evening.

Old Jane didn't talk much. She had lived alone long enough to have forgotten the trick of conversation. Speech is mostly habit, anyhow. But she could listen. Strange as it seems to me now, I used to sit in her doorway those warm April evenings while the frogs sang along the river and the blacksmith clink-clinked in his shop down below us, and talk to her about everything that came into my mind. It must have been her stillness. Perhaps it was spring. Probably it was both.

It was on one of these evenings that she mentioned the zinnias. She was sitting in the rocker, looking out of the window, and I could tell that she was troubled. She started by saying that she wouldn't be able to plant them this year, and she looked at me as though hoping for a contradiction. I couldn't say anything. She was hardly able to walk, much less to plant flowers. It didn't occur to me to offer to plant them for her. I didn't know then that they meant so much to her; and I let her stumble and grope for words to tell me what she wanted, while I sat stupidly, wondering what in the world she was trying to say, and watching her fingers play up and down the fringe of her shawl until I felt I should scream if she kept it up another minute.

I didn't want to talk about the zinnias. I had almost forgotten them. I resented them too, for they brought back the Old Jane of the past, and I did not like her. Reluctantly, I got the shoe-box from the cupboard as she asked me, and stood by her, impatient, while she opened it, her fingers shaking and fumbling at the knot in the string. I longed to break it.

The box was full of zinnia seed, sorted and labelled and tied in neat packages.

"But zinnias," I told her, "sometimes come up from dropped seed. You might not have to plant them this year."

But she shook her head, and taking out the packages showed me that she had saved only the kinds she wanted. I was openly scornful that they should have been all reds and yellows—the brightest, most arresting, least attractive colors.

I didn't want to plant them, but I did. It took me three days. Up the hill to the edge of the woods and around the vegetable-garden; beyond the lilacs and mock-oranges clear down to the road—back-breaking, endless. I wonder what made me do it? I wouldn't have done it at home. Why didn't I ask some one to help me? I had two brothers, young enough to do as I told them—grudgingly. I don't know. Why do mothers work so zealously for their children? The answer to one will fit the other.

After it was all over and every seed planted, I went back to the house and dropped on the doorstep at Old Jane's feet and asked her, irritably, why in the world she wanted so many zinnias. Her face grew puzzled and worried, like a child's when he does not understand you, and for a long minute she did not answer.

I was sorry I had asked her. She looked so pitiful, and her lips quivered with the effort to find words that would tell me.

"I—I—like zinnias. They are so—so——"

She stopped, looking down, her fingers again at the fringe of her shawl.

I let it go at that, for she did not finish. But I wondered about it. They were so—so—what? What did they seem to Old Jane that she wanted so many of them? I knew what they seemed to me: common

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and ugly, especially the reds and yellows. Why didn't she plant pansies, or iris, or forget-me-nots?

Going home that night, stiff and sore, I decided that she was a foolish old woman with poor taste in flowers and that so far as I was concerned she could plant her own ugly old zinnias after this.

But for a long time her words puzzled me. "I like zinnias. They are so—so—" what? I caught myself finishing the sentence this way—that way. But I did not ask her. Something told me that I should not learn any more if I did.

In spite of my protest I was interested in the zinnias. I half-expected them to be up and growing the next morning, and was impatient that they were not. Flowers you have planted with your own hands never lose their hold upon you. I watched jealously for every new leaf on those zinnias, and ran to tell Old Jane when the first buds showed. I was disappointed that she appeared to feel no interest in them. These preliminaries to blooming that drew me out every morning to measure the growth of the day before seemed to have no attraction for her. But of course she hadn't planted these zinnias.

I didn't go in to see her every day. Sometimes mother went, sometimes the doctor. But I made a point of going to school by her house and waving to her every morning. She was always at the window, watching, waiting. That was it—waiting. What was she waiting for? I wondered. A woman her age should have been done with waiting. Everything that could possibly happen to her had happened, it seemed to me.

"Doc" Andrews, short and fat and bald, stopped oftener and oftener and swore his choicest oaths for her. But that did not seem to be what she wanted. It was quite a task for "Doc" to come so far, too, for he was club-footed, and walking wasn't easy. He always made me think of a chickadee, hopping about, twittering, busy. But Old Jane only looked at him blankly, and he left, grumbling and shaking his head and vowing to me, outside, that the woman wouldn't live a week. There was nothing left of her but eyes.

She did, though.

And at last the zinnias bloomed.

You never saw anything like them. There they were, deep orange and red against the woods on the hillside; bright yellow and red around the unplanted vegetable-garden; tumbling down the steep banks from the forest to circle like bright-frocked, dancing children about the mock-oranges and lilacs; falling in a mad and gorgeous cataract of color over the slope and down the road to the river. You had the feeling that only the water held them back, like a victorious army waiting a crossing; that at the first chance they would go on and on, rioting brilliantly up the other side and across the hills and out of sight in the distance. All that Old Jane had meant, they were—and more. It was as though some artist in a frenzy had splashed his colors helter-skelter upon a huge canvas of earth and sky and water, putting on shade after shade, more and more reckless, until no spot was left uncovered and he was forced to stop, astonished at the result of his own effort.

That was the way I felt about the zinnias. They were breath-taking. Even I, who had planted them, found them decidedly disconcerting. I had planted zinnias, but instead of them unnumbered sunsets had drifted down to bloom forever in Old Jane's garden. The genie conjured from the shoe-box had outdone himself and gone, leaving the conjurer overwhelmed by his own magic.

"Doc" Andrews, mopping his bald spot, vowed that it was dangerous to look at them without smoked glasses.

Old Jane was another person. I knew now why she had been waiting. The morning the zinnias reached their fullest bloom she walked from the bed to the window without my help, and stood staring out like a person in a trance, until her knees gave way from weakness, and she stumbled backward into her chair, breathing rapidly. I noticed a little pulse in her throat beating like the heart of a bird when you hold it close in your hand.

All day her cheeks were flushed and her eyes brilliant. But her hands were like leaves in the wind when she moved them. I wonder now why I didn't think of the revivals and of Old Jane's shouting. It is strange that I didn't, for the effect of the zinnias was exactly the same: the suppressed exultation, the light back of



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her face, the glow in her smoky eyes; the same sense of drama, of something well done, of fulfilment. I don't see how it escaped me, but it did. It was as though the zinnias were merely the shouting expressed in color, like that delicate instrument which can chart the distant planets for us: red for this and blue for that and green for something else. Why not?

I remember telling "Doc" Andrews that Old Jane was lots, lots better since the zinnias bloomed. He should see her. He did, and shook his head. There must have been something about her that I did not see. He got it, though. He got a great deal that other folks missed. Physical deformities sometimes do that to people.

The next week they sent me to my aunt's in Boston, to be outfitted for school. The family had decided that I was ready for more than Stony Valley could give me. I remember that my young brothers were very happy when I left, though they tried not to show it too plainly. I cried a little on the train, and decided that boys were ungrateful and that I should never marry.

In September mother wrote me that Old Jane had died, just after the frost took the zinnias. She was sorry they did not have any for the funeral, since Old Jane was so fond of them. I can't tell you just how I felt about Old Jane's death. I cared for her, in a way, but my feeling had not been exactly affection. I don't know just what it was. I do remember that I was glad the frost had taken the zinnias. I didn't want them used for the funeral. I don't believe Old Jane would have, either. They were so much alive. That was it! They were so much alive! So intense, so vivid, so dramatic, so everything that, with the revivals, had ceased to be in Old Jane's life and in Stony Valley.

"They are so—so——"

I can see Old Jane's face now, puzzled, with the look of a little child's when he does not know what you mean.

"They are so—so—" alive?

I wonder if that was what Old Jane had tried so hard to say. Perhaps so—perhaps not. It doesn't make any particular difference. I know now what she meant. Loneliness is a good interpreter.

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# Ships in the Fog

BY JULIET WHITON

I HEAR them through dark streets along the town
Reverberating mournfully, these slow
Black ships, that sail up all the seas and down,
That come like shadows and like shadows go.
I hear them through the walls of every dream,
Like wraiths that beckon, whom I cannot follow:
Voices of mist and fog and dark that seem
To echo and re-echo, hollow, hollow.
Some warm still night when stars and planets sleep,
When fickle suns to other worlds have gone,
I hope that I shall find on a far deep
A ship at anchor, waiting, tall and lone,
To take me from a round of time well lost,
To high adventurous days, wind-swept, wave-tossed.

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# Gold from Salt Water

EPISODES IN THE CAREER OF THE KING OF RUM ROW

BY WALTER KARIG

THIS is the biography of an anonymous man, who has held tremendous power in this country, and who has left the stamp of his influence indelibly on contemporary civilization in the United States. His anonymity is dictated not by modesty, for he is not a modest man, but by expediency. Circumstantial evidence alone supports the statements set forth here as facts, but circumstantial evidence has established the existence of unseen planets and satellites before this. The biographer is a newspaper man who obtained his material at the culmination of an adventure which began as a midnight assignment and developed into a hare-and-hounds chase in which he was the at once eager and unwilling hare. The rôle of the hounds was taken by a corporal's squad of the private army mentioned below, who misinterpreted the professional scrutiny the writer bent upon their mysterious maritime activities.

SOMEWHERE along the Atlantic, where salt sea-breezes blend with the scent of pine, or, perhaps, hibiscus, to form an ozone cocktail heady enough to turn the head of Coral Gable's nativest son, a king is living in retirement. His was a kingdom, until he recently dissolved it, which appeared on no official maps, but which was recognized, and that most vigorously, by the United States.

He is merry, is this ex-monarch. He can afford to be, now. He is living in one of his three bungalow palaces, over a well-stocked cellar, surrounded by rare paintings, fabulous rugs, and a library the contents of which reflect the same catholicity and good taste as the aforementioned cellar. His windows overlook the ocean, where once the ships of this monarch's fleet lay on the horizon and made war with the United States.

Oh, yes, he was a regular king; an absolute monarch, with an army, a navy, and an air fleet. His royal arms, though, are nowhere in evidence. They were emblazoned on a field of gold, an old-fashioned mahogany bar, sinister; crest, a non-refillable bottle embattled, with the motto "Two pints make a gallon."

For he was King of the Rum-Runners, a despot who waged only aggressive warfare, yet with the enthusiastic assent of his subjects. A warrior who sportingly helped support, through taxes, the armaments of his foe. But then, he derived all his wealth from that foe's own citizenry.

An American, this ex-king, and something of a Babbitt; born a thousand miles from the sound of the surf, townsman and boon companion of one of our late Presidents, with whom he played poker. Since giving up his kingship a few months ago, the royal buckeye has succeeded to his former titles of churchman and "joiner." But let's begin at the beginning.

His name—no matter. It's a typical mid-Western name, plain and unregal as an Ohio farmhouse. His youth was that of any middling well-to-do, small-town boy's. His public-school education completed, there came the question of college. The home State had several universities, and a college at every other stop on the Interurban, so of course the lad was sent East to complete his studies at a college known for the brand of engineers, and not football teams, it turns out. The future monarch, not dreaming of the impending purple, studied and played and took part in beer-drinking excursions to a near-by seaport, which is to say Hoboken. By judiciously applying himself to these pursuits he graduated as a fairly reliable mechanical engineer, and in that field was making a good income and a better



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reputation when America entered the war.

As is the case with every hero, real and fictional, the war proved a turning-point. Our third person singular masculine pronoun enlisted, spent ninety days in an O. T. C. learning how to apply his civilian engineering to war-time emergencies, and just had time to buy two gold-plated shoulder-bars before being shipped overseas from an "Atlantic port" whose waterfront he had trod as a college student.

His war career was brief and tragic. A burst of flame and steel before he had learned how to pronounce "Deux cognacs encore," but not before the single gold bar on each shoulder had become twin oblongs of silver, and the subject of these annals was entered at a French base hospital as "blessé et reformé." For him the war was over.

America, on the hero's unheralded return, was dry. Personal libertarians were still bashful about mentioning bootleggers, but local stocks were already running low. Liquor cost more than it does to-day and was harder to get. But the invalided captain was indifferent to that. Two major worries gripped him. One was the regaining of his health, the other gaining recognition from the government of his incapacitation as an income-amassing engineer. Neither was gaining success when, in the fall of 1919, the veteran selected the Atlantic coast as the area of his convalescence.

In a shack on the sand-dunes the physically broken man wooed health. When the breezes grew sharp he sought exercise by oaring a small boat along the ocean's fringe, pretending to catch fish, but actually trying to escape the mounting worries relating to food, rent, medical attention, and other things wounded veterans know about.

Perhaps he is only embroidering his own experiences when he leans back in an armchair these days and confides to a friend that "I looked at all that ocean and I remembered some scientist had extracted gold from sea-water once. And I wished I had studied chemistry, because gold, no matter how minute the quantity, was one thing I hadn't, but needed badly."

And then gold—minted gold—leaped out of the waves and tumbled into his lap.

One day a boatman rowed over to the solitary, idling figure and cautiously offered him a bottle of liquor.

"It's good stuff," he argued. "Just off the ship." Immortal phrase!

The ex-captain and king-to-be at first refused. He was a good citizen, and anyhow he didn't like drinking for drinking's sake. Besides, his condition forbade indulgence. Besides that, to heap up reasons, he didn't have the money. But neither had he companionship, so he encouraged conversation.

He learned that the bottle, and a few companion bottles, had been obtained from a Bahamas schooner anchored outside the harbor. Individual boatmen, clammers, and fishermen were buying liquor in broken lots and selling it at a comfortable profit to less daring lawbreakers on shore. "Fishin's about over," the boatman concluded, "and it's anything to turn an honest penny."

The veteran inquired more pointedly about the schooner, lone forerunner of the rum-fleet-to-be, but the boatman was shrewd. What a loss to history that the identity of that pioneer vessel was not learned!

But such things as he had learned stuck in the mind of the convalescent soldier. It was a finely trained mind, from which the war had not blasted the lessons of coordination, efficiency, and business on a quantity basis which he had learned in his profession. The poverty-stricken, broken-bodied ex-soldier turned and tossed on his reclaimed army cot that night, and came to certain conclusions.

These conclusions were laid before the competing boatmen. The business and army executive pointed out the value of co-operation, of applied efficiency, of this and that long-phrased dogma of big business. And the simple boatmen listened. If this "slick, edjucated feller" was right, then the clams and fish could wallow unmolested hereafter, they reasoned. The sea held bigger spoils. Instead of cut-throat competition for haphazard customers, a vision was conjured before their puckered eyes of team-work to supply an inexhaustible market.

The fishermen had friends in the

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trucking business. And truckmen knew saloon-keepers. All the raw materials were at hand. All that was needed was to insure a source and to co-ordinate the machinery.

Business was begun in a small way, which makes this story the perfect parallel of any in the *Go-Getter Magazine*. The next schooner to linger off the coast was cleaned out in one operation by a crew of budding rum-runners in a hired motor-boat, captained by the ex-army officer and crony of Presidents. The liquor was run ashore in daylight—the augmented coast-guard was not yet—and loaded on automobile trucks which smelled strongly of fish. Now, what with what's dumped into sewers and carted in trucks, fish are more apt to smell like liquor.

The Jamaica captain of the schooner was amazed. When he reached his home port he told of his adventure, and immediately the wholesale stocks of two or three distillers were sold out to seamen who revelled at the thought of a tidy, tractable cargo to be discharged without port fees and pilotage at a swift and appreciable profit.

Meantime, in the arid States, half a dozen truckmen, an equal number of coastwise fishermen, and a wounded veteran were dividing the profits of their first venture and planning a second coup. When two schooners and a tramp steamer lately in the asphalt trade out of Trinidad dropped anchor within sight of the summer colony on the dunes, the machinery formed by the ex-engineer out of simple minds, strong bodies, and gasoline motors was beginning to function handsomely. The British boats were cleaned out in half a dozen trips, and turned back to the South without having so much as hailed a tug or grated against a dock.

And the rising young monarch and his merrie men? They took on a few recruits and bought pianos and talking-machines without the embarrassment of time payments. That is, the merrie men did. The monarch made a first payment on a capacious speed boat.

The word spread. Other ships arrived and Rum Row, by spring, was an actuality. Pretenders to the king's throne appeared, but already our hero was above competition. He commanded a sea fleet of several speedy motor-boats and a land fleet of powerful trucks. Both fleets were manned by men who could drive one-handed, without lights—but trustworthy and loyal.

The word spread to official circles, also. Federal cognizance of the smuggling was followed by the beginning of hostilities which are still being waged, even with the man who brought it all about snug in retirement.

War was declared on land and sea, and the king and his henchmen found things less of a sinecure. War councils were held.

The king was not ready to quit. He had purchased three steamships and was ready to eliminate one item of cost by bringing his supplies from Scotland in his own bottoms. So he accepted the gage of battle.

"But I warned my men—no rough-house," he declares now. "When we were greeted with lead we answered with gold, and that stopped the guns more readily than a reply in kind. But with the hijackers—" A quiet smile on a bronzed face.

Rum Row and competition grew apace, and the king ruled on. Even the pretenders to the throne treated him with respect. He met the coast-guard's speed boats with speedier vessels. He enlisted an aviator or two, not as carriers but as scouts. For weeks his speed boats rolled idly at the wharfs while competitors drew the gun-fire and harrying of the coast-guard. Then, on a favorable night, the king ordered out his army and navy and by dawn a few thousand more potential drinks were speeding inland.

Last year the king decided that he had had enough. The outdoor life had brought health to his body; the keen, swift thinking had brought health to his mind. And his ships and trucks had brought him wealth beyond that which he could have amassed in the lifetime of a dozen successful mechanical engineers.

He relaxed. And his cohorts, also beyond financial worry, did not balk at the vacation.

Then the government announced that it had put a stop to rum-running. It was truthfully reported that Rum Row was about dried up. It would go hard with

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New Yorkers who expected to toast in the New Year, or who envisioned plum puddings blazing in brandy—real brandy—for the Yule.

It was a challenge, a sporting challenge. The king yawned, stretched, and summoned his couriers. The cables carried certain unintelligible words. For a few brief nights, a week or two later, one section of the wintry coast seethed with invisible life. Lights flashed momentarily. Motors chugged far out at sea. Sharp-nosed boats drifted against the shingle, silently. On back roads throttled engines purred, then roared into life.

Sixteen thousand bags of uncut liquor are reputed to have poured into the metropolitan area for Christmas, which means that, by the time the middleman completed his miracles of converting water and burned sugar into rare old Scotch, nearly three-quarters of a million families were assured of a bottle apiece for the holidays.

The underworld heard of the *coup*, and rushed to the king with certain proposals to smuggle in dope, jewels, and what-not while his organization was hitting on all twelve. But the king, for all his sinfulness, had scruples.

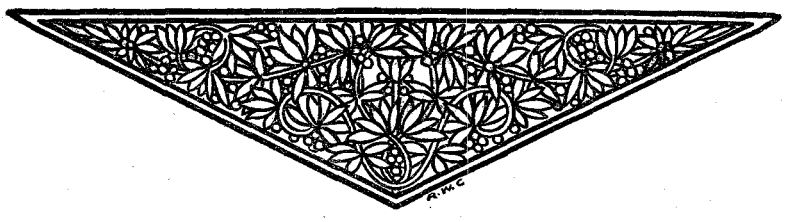
"Why, I was offered $20,000 to bring in a boat-load of Chinese," he relates. "Hell! A quart of good liquor on the sideboard will make Christmas the merrier, I told 'em, but who the devil wants a Chinaman for Christmas?"

That was the king's last big job. In the spring, when the universal absence of the sign of the bock signalled the time to resume rum-running, the monarch announced to his subjects that he had retired.

"There's a lot of fellows trying to carry on where I left off," he told them. "And I see by the papers that the twelve-mile limit won nine miles by the decree of the Supreme Court. You've only got to go out the old three miles now. Hop to it. But I'm through."

He lives now surrounded by every comfort a cultured mind and luxury-attuned body can demand. His fortune is invested in mortgages. He is backing a huge commercial enterprise. He was one of the fortunate few who took profits out of Florida real estate in cash, not paper. His homes were built to plans of his own drawing: a glorified Cape Cod cottage on the New England coast for summer use; a Spanish bungalow under the palms for winter; and a cosey bachelor bungalow for in-between times. He will talk about Picasso and Sloan, Joyce and Dos Passos, but would rather not discuss Martel or Hennessey or Old Smuggler.

"You see," says he, "it's time I was thinking of getting married, and you can't go to courting or raising a family with the smell of liquor on your coat-tails, or a gang of Federal agents reaching after that part of your attire. It really isn't done in the very best of families."



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# AS I LIKE IT

BY WILLIAM LYON PHELPS

WHEN old Izaak Walton died in 1683, he left a sum of money *to his publisher;* in his lifetime he had shown a genius for saying and doing the supergentle thing, and the ruling passion was strong in death. Many authors believe that their publishers do not sufficiently advertise their books, do not give them sufficiently favorable contracts, and when the royalty statement appears, they believe there must be something crooked. "Why, I personally know some individuals who have bought more copies of my book than this!"

Publishers are, and must be, men of affairs; but there is nothing incompatible between artistic genius and practical business ability. There are probably no shrewder business men anywhere than Bernard Shaw and Richard Strauss; and the circumstances of Shakespeare's career seem to indicate that he understood how to make, keep, increase, and invest money. It is not always the poet, playwright, novelist who is a dreamer and his publisher the opposite. I think it is possible that if we could know intimately all the authors in New York, and all the publishers in New York, we should find as much idealism and artistic appreciation in the latter group as in the former.

A playwright told me that in the numerous conversations he had with his successful fellow craftsmen, the subjects of talk were almost never concerned with art, or beauty, or style, or ideals; what they talked about concerned motor-cars, prize-fighters, base-ball, women, summer homes, and various expensive luxuries made possible by the sale of their writings. I think it is possible that if we could know publishers intimately, we should——

Anyhow, I have never yet been disappointed or disillusioned in becoming closely acquainted with any publisher. That is an amazing statement, but not more so than the fact.

To talk with William Heinemann, J. M. Dent, Edwin Ginn, John Lane, Henry Holt—and it was my privilege to enjoy their acquaintance—was an illuminating experience. These publishers felt that the name at the foot of the title-page must be kept as honorable as the name in the middle, and they were proud of the reputation established by their respective houses.

I have before my eyes a beautiful volume dedicated to the memory of Thomas B. Mosher, of Portland. It is called "Amphora. A Second Collection of Prose and Verse Chosen by the Editor of the Bibelot." It is embellished with a portrait and contains some original verse by Mosher himself. Mr. Mosher loved good books, and loved to make them. He was an excellent critic with a flair for beauty that enabled him to discern what was worth preservation in the work of writers both living and dead, and he preserved it in a beautiful way. A Mosher book came to mean a book invariably good and invariably well printed. There are thousands of book-lovers who will never forget this man, who will always hold his name in reverence.

"Amphora" contains selections from authors living and dead, and tributes to the publisher from Christopher Morley, Professor Frederick Pottle, John L. Foley, and Spencer Miller, Jr. These memorial essays should be read entire, but as only 925 copies were printed, and as it is desirable that 925,000 people should read them, I will now make a few citations for the benefit of the first hundred thousand.

*Mr. Morley:*

What was there in this hardy sea-bred uncolleged down-easter that made him open so many magic portholes? He had the pure genius of book-fancy; an uneducated man, as uneducated as Chaucer and Lamb and Conrad; and I like to think that when he took Aldus's device for himself there was some memory of the time when an anchor meant more to him than an emblem printed on a title-page.



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*Mr. Pottle:*

Thomas Bird Mosher, publisher of rare and limited editions of books in *belles-lettres*, died at his home in Portland, Maine, on August 31, 1923, at the age of seventy-one . . . this man, whose name was known in San Francisco and London, in Bombay and Sydney, . . . slipped out of the life of their city without causing so much as a ripple of excitement. The truth is that he never really lived in Portland. He resided there almost continuously for over fifty years, he published his books there from the same address for thirty-two years, but he actually lived in a city of wider horizons. . . . Those exquisite forewords which are the glory of the Mosher editions contain the passion and rapture of his talk, but they do not contain the humor, the sunny irony, the racy colloquial quality of his conversation. The gleam of his eye is there, but not the twinkle. We talked always of books.

*Mr. Foley:*

But no memorial volume can have any claim to being complete unless it defines Mr. Mosher's position as an editor and publisher, and unless it sets forth his personality among his friends. The former is established by the very individual and creative publishing he achieved and sustained in America over many years; the latter can really be appreciated only by those who knew him in the intimacy of his remarkable library. There he lived in an other-worldliness of ideal beauty—to him the essential reality—and this escape he offered to many other seekers through the exquisite reprints which he put within their reach.

*Mr. Miller:*

The law of excellence and the law of democracy stand in apparent conflict one with another in our modern age. They seem outwardly to have little in common. Yet Thomas Bird Mosher resolved this conflict through a sharing of enduring prose and poetry with his fellowmen. It was his gift to know what was excellent; it was his passion to share this excellence as widely as possible; it was his destiny to attain the realization of his ideal. He linked beauty which is ageless in art with the desire for the best which is timeless in the spirit of man.

In reading Edna Ferber's "Show Boat" I had supposed I was reading an historical romance dealing with a phase of floating theatrical life that had become obsolete. Not being altogether sure of this, I wrote to the author and she was kind enough to send me the following letter:

There are, I should say, ten or twelve show boats now playing the rivers of the United States. Because of the dangers of the Mississippi they rarely play that river now. But they are well known on the Ohio, the Missouri, the smaller rivers of the middle west, and on the eastern rivers and the southern. The James Adams Floating Theatre, for example, plays Maryland and North Carolina. She's probably somewhere in Maryland now. They are much grander and larger than they used to be, of course. And they make a lot of money. . . . I'm sorry you didn't like Show Boat as well as So Big. I like it better. But that you liked it at all is good news.

If I had the art to write either one of them, I should feel ninety feet high; if I had written both, I should explode.

Every one who reads these pages knows that, although I am not a Catholic, I am an admirer of the Catholic Church, and count many intimate friends among priests and nuns. I shall not be misunderstood, therefore, when I say that I think some Catholics are unduly sensitive about Edna Ferber's allusion to a Chicago convent in "Show Boat." I have asked her nothing about it, and have no authority to speak for her, which she is quite capable of doing for herself. But I feel certain that she never intended any slur on Catholics or on Catholic schools. From the Philadelphia *Catholic Standard and Times*, October 30, 1926, I learn that the International Federation of Catholic Alumnæ has protested, and demanded that seven pages of the book be eliminated. I am sure that in this instance they are unduly sensitive. Suppose every boys' and girls' preparatory school which has been unflatteringly described by novelists—and there are many instances—should utter a formal protest, or threaten to bring suit!

Those Americans who are angry at Dean Inge for what he said in his book "England" will have their feelings assuaged if they will read "American Soundings," by J. St. Loe Strachey, the editor of the London *Spectator*. I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Strachey on his tour through New England, and I regard him as an admirable unofficial ambassador. He seems to have enjoyed himself enormously in America, and has apparently only the happiest memories of his sojourn. I wish we Americans were really so fine as

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he says we are. The American autumn may have had something to do with it. November, which is the worst month in the British calendar, is nearly the best with us. I am writing on Thanksgiving Day, a typical New Haven November day, not a cloud in the sky, and the air, which used to be like champagne, is now like Apollinaris, or, in other words, is doing its best under present conditions. I remember entertaining a professor from the Sorbonne on his first visit to America. It was in mid-November, cloudless and windless. I asked him—knowing myself what November connotes in Paris—what he thought of our November climate? He remarked, "C'est insensé."

Let us get rid of national prejudices. Every man to whom the word "foreigner" has the slightest tinge of inferiority is living in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity. Until he can *think* "foreigner" as a description and not an epithet, he is living in parochial, hide-bound, pin-headed stupidity.

There are so many books to-day coming from minds incurably vulgar, that it is a pleasure to read one written by a man of the world who is also a gentleman. Lord Grey's "Fallodon Papers" is the expression of a mind so filled with beauty and wisdom that I regard these essays as a civilizing force. Strange that a man who has travelled so little should be so free from prejudice and narrowness. If you want to spend two hours in the best possible company, get this book.

Lord Grey is such an enthusiastic fisher that he almost, not quite, persuades me to go afishing. It is the only sport in which I take not the slightest interest. If I had to spend a day with hook and line, I should spend it as follows. I should take a basket containing a copious lunch, plenty of tobacco, several good books. The first stream I reached, I should (unless forbidden by sign-post) throw in the line. That done, I should pay no further attention to it. I should read, and smoke, and eat, and then read and smoke. When it was time to go home, I should pull in the line, and know, whether there was anything on it or not, I had passed a pleasant day.

Some good mystery stories: "The Silver Forest," by Ben Ames Williams, a born teller of tales. A party of men and women, all respectable, are snowed in; one of them is murdered by one of the company. Who did it? Find out for yourself, and guess correctly if you can. "No. 18," by J. J. Farjeon, so ingeniously complicated that the reader is as puzzled as are most of the characters. I should also recommend "The Cheyne Mystery," by F. W. Crofts, if I had not totally forgotten the plot. For the life of me, I cannot remember a single incident; yet I remember enjoying it.

Bliss Perry performed a great and lasting service in condensing Emerson's "Journals" into one volume. As we have it now, this is one of the wisest, richest, and most charming books in the world. Mr. Woodberry said of Emerson: "His is the only great mind that America has produced in literature." Open at any page and you will be rewarded. In one respect Emerson belied his own teaching. He said that we could choose between the truth and peace of mind—we could not have both. But apparently he did have both.

Some of the prominent figures of the Golden Age of American literature are fading, visibly fading; every year adds to the lustre of Emerson.

In reading N. W. Stephenson's "Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln," I begin to see why a lawyer and politician of only moderate experience and success became equal to the greatest task that could have been imposed on a statesman. See St. Matthew 25:21. An English aristocrat says that Lincoln knew only one tune, "Yankee Doodle," meaning that when he was President no thought of self ever entered his head; he thought only of his country. If America had done nothing for the world except to contribute the mind of Emerson and the practical wisdom of Lincoln, she would have earned her place in civilization.

It is a difficult thing for any school or college teacher to do creative work in literature; his writing helps his teaching, but I am sure that active teaching is injurious to the art of composition. Hence John Erskine is an extraordinary person. A professor of English in Columbia, he has not only written good essays, but much

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original verse, two exceedingly clever novels, and at a public performance by a symphony orchestra, he was the piano soloist! No one man has any right to do so many things, and do them so well. All I can do is to take off my hat.

An ex-professor who is a literary artist is Stark Young. He has written much drama criticism, many plays, and now, to those who love a beautiful English style, I recommend his novel "Heaven Trees." It is a novel without narrative; but as a picture of a family group, and of an environment, and as an illustration of sheer beauty of language, it is a triumph.

The secret of good writing may possibly be discoverable, even though it remain inimitable; but the secret of genius is beyond all conjecture. No one has ever explained the perennial charm of "Pride and Prejudice," and no one ever will. I read it for the sixth or seventh time this month, and of course found it better than ever. I was pleased when my friend George L. Fox telephoned me that he had just read in the London *Times* of a meeting of Jane Austen worshippers, at which the English critic, John Bailey, said he had read "Pride and Prejudice" thirty times; while John Buchan said Jane's best novel was "Persuasion."

Which is Scott's best novel? This question was once discussed by Sir William Fraser and Bulwer-Lytton. They agreed each to write his choice on a separate slip of paper and compare. Sir William announced that he knew in advance they would agree. They both wrote "The Bride of Lammermoor." Mark Twain hated the novels of Scott; he regarded him as one of the world's worst writers. Then some one persuaded him to read "Quentin Durward," and he was so captivated that he declared Scott could not have written it.

Nominations for the Ignoble Prize, with editorial notes:

Ending a speech with "I thank you." From Arthur E. Woodruff, of New Haven. This ought now to happen only in burlesque, but in the last two weeks I have had the misfortune to hear it seriously three times.

"Ye shoppe," on signboards and advertisements. From Miss Anna Fessenden, of Salem, Mass.

Those intolerant free spirits who so naively restrict freedom of soul to their own definition of it. There should be a special hell for such. From Mary Elizabeth Stewart, of the University of Kentucky.

These expressions regarding robbery—thug, yeggman, bandit, "was relieved of purse, or money." From Doctor Anne E. Perkins, of Gowanda State Homeopathic Hospital.

"Urge" as a noun; also "inferiority complex." From Miss Esther Singleton, of New York. To this I will also add the noun "lure"—the *lure* of God's great outdoors, etc., etc.

"Musical critic" instead of "music critic." From Grace Ritter, of Palm Beach. The right use is shown in "art critic" and "nerve specialist." But how about "dramatic critic"?

"By and large" and "If you know what I mean." From Mrs. Claude P. Fox, of Greeneville, Tenn. The latter phrase has been frequently pilloried by F. P. A.

"Browse" (in a library), "student body" (why not faculty body?), "gotten," and, if "onto" is given a clean bill of health, why quarantine "offof"? From Morgan Barnes, of the Thacher School, Ojai, Calif.

I once made a crusade against "gotten," but I was forced to abandon it. Americans say *gotten* and the English say *got*, but the longer form is used frequently in the Authorized Version of the Bible, and by plenty of standard writers. For "gotten" and "onto" see Fowler's "Dictionary of Modern Usage."

James H. Snowden, editor of *The Presbyterian Banner*, of Pittsburgh, nominates for the Ignoble Prize an article in this magazine called "Is the Minister a Student?"

Now, my own opinion is that ministers as a group do more studying and more thinking than the members of any other profession. I also feel sure that there is no class of persons anywhere which makes more sacrifices than ministers in order to give their children the best and most untrammelled education.

Mrs. Thomas Semonian, of Arlington, Mass., writes:

May I thank you for opening the "chest relief channel"? In your October number I observe many have found relief, and I have come to join that throng.

For two or three years, the particular word "achievement" has waved a red flag

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before my maddened eyes. In fact, when in the same number you yourself flaunt the red flag, "The great achievement here, as in 'The White Monkey,' is Soames," I am emboldened to action on my typewriter.

This achievement disease, within my knowledge, began when Michael Arlen made such a stir with his much discussed novel. A member of a class I attend, inquired of the instructor if "Arlen had made a literary achievement." Since then, I have been acutely aware of not only literary, artistic, and musical achievements, but also achievements of "Mobiloil for Fords," "The highest value achievements of the new Hudson coach and sedan" (*Collier's National Weekly*, September 25), "the achievement of the new orthophonia victrola" (*Literary Digest*, October 30), "the achievement of John Davey, tree surgeon" (SCRIBNER'S, October number). It seems, without difficulty, one can achieve a double chin, a bran muffin, a best seller, a tooth paste, and a "B" battery, and mind you, they are all "real achievements," no fraud there! Add to this all the achievements the heroes and heroines achieve in SCRIBNER'S, and *Harper's* and *The Bookman*, not leaving out the *Atlantic Monthly*, there is some achievement there too, you may well appreciate the fact that I have achieved a weariness akin to despair.

Upon completing this letter, I began to read the editorials in one of the evening papers. There I discover, the new uniforms of our El workers were achieved not by arbitration but by direct negotiation. So you can see, Mr. Phelps, that my complaint is not an idle one. "Achievement" stalks through almost every written page.

Leslie W. Miller, of Martha's Vineyard, writes:

Mr. Basil King, to whose work as a novelist be all honor accorded, is certainly wrong in claiming an Ignoble Prize for the use of *talk* as a transitive verb. In how many pulpits to-night, and in how many pre-election rallies to-morrow will parsons and politicians be talking nonsense about prohibition, fundamentalism, the sanctity of the Athanasian Creed, the inviolability of the Blue Laws of 1794, and the Lord knows what beside? And what form of expression has our vernacular formulated that so adequately characterizes their utterances as the one I have used?

Day Tuttle, who is connected with the Community Theatre at Santa Barbara, calls my attention to the fact that in "Main Street" appears an excursion to "Mantrap Lake." I had forgotten that the name "Mantrap" appeared in the earlier novel, though I thought I remembered that book particularly well.

Mr. Tuttle in the same letter tells me that his friend Norman Jaffray, a Yale pundit, makes the following contribution to *The Salon:*

A Cambridge English professor was lecturing to the undergraduates on Browning's "Pacchiarotto and How He Worked in Distemper." He commented, "This, gentlemen, is not the story of a brave dog, as most of you imagine, and how he carried on."

Doctor Lewis Perry, the principal of Phillips Academy, Exeter, writes that he once read through the "Faery Queene," and that he will never do it again.

Mrs. William A. Wilbur, of Washington, D. C., is also qualified to enter the Faery Queene Club, as she read the poem aloud to her father when she was fifteen years old.

Miss Carrie Lott, of Eugene, Oregon, sends me the following newspaper headline:

COLUMBIA RUNES YIELD
VIKING SAGA

which oracular legend refers to the discovery near the Columbia River of traces of a long-ago visit by the Norsemen.

H. O. Du Bois, of New York, registers hatred for two words constantly used in newspaper headlines, LAUD and WED. Laud is a word one seldom hears, and seldom sees except in headlines, where it is common. Mr. Du Bois says, "Nobody marries nowadays: everybody weds!" I suppose these two words are used for space economy.

The Reverend Rupert Simonds, of Faribault, Minn., who, like most clergymen, is a scholarly, thoughtful, and well-read man, recently ordered two books from the publishers. In reply he received a post-card, on which was typewritten:

The Heavenly Host will be sent to you in a few days. The Least of These will be sent direct to you from the publisher.

Anyhow, he will not entertain angels unawares.

Frederick J. Shepard, of Buffalo, nominates Bret Harte's "The Right Eye of the

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Commander" as the best short story ever written, and would like to know if any one agrees with him.

Harry P. Wood writes from Pago Pago:

I dip my fountain pen to propose St. Simeon Stylites as a columnist of note.

Do *you* know where American Samoa is? Recently the Navy Department in Washington, under the jurisdiction of which the islands have been for the past 26 years, directed that the body of a deceased sailor be sent home *via* the Philippines! Our only route to San Francisco is *via* Honolulu—2,400 miles north, and the Philippines are some thousands of miles west of Honolulu! Our whereabouts is not generally known. We are about half way between Sydney, N. S. W., and San Francisco. . . . Pago Pago harbour is the finest in the South Seas—a lovely place—always like an Adirondack lake in early summer. We are constantly reminded of R. L. S. and his life in Samoa. Three of my half-caste office employees are from Upolu and have known him—my office safe was once part of the furniture of Vailima.

I am here as American judge of High District and Probate Courts, Secretary of Native Affairs and various other things including Chairman of Board of Education —19 schools and 1800 plus children in schools.

I saw you last in 1900 in a country churchyard at Stoke Poges—I hope to see you here.

Joseph F. Paxton, Professor of Greek at the University of Oklahoma, suggests a new word—*Mushraker*. "It (obviously?) designates one too industrious in seeking and using 'sob-stuff' and mushy sentimentality." I hereby give mushraker a hearty welcome into the English language.

Mrs. Harry F. Comer, of Chapel Hill, N. C., sends me a clipping (English "cutting") from the Durham *Morning Herald*, and an editorial from the Raleigh *News and Observer*, by which it appears that the Raleigh Merchants' Association have requested that in all advertising and placard merchandising XMAS be tabooed, and that the word be printed CHRISTMAS. It is also requested that all editors and printers follow this good example. Amen.

Knute Rockne, the famous coach of the famous Notre Dame football eleven, has made an epigram, according to the report in the daily press. "Most men when they think they are thinking are merely rearranging their prejudices."

The New York newspapers deservedly gave front-page space to an athletic feat performed by two Indians, Thomas Zafiro and Leonicio San Miguel, who, in Mexico, on November 7, ran on the highway to Mexico City, 62½ miles in 9 hours, 37 minutes. This is excellent; but it is not accurate to think it unprecedented, or to say (as was added in the press notices) that the only feat in modern history equal to it was that of an emissary of Abd-el-Krim, who in French Morocco ran 68.35 miles last spring, in about 10 hours and 30 minutes. For, on October 18, 1916, Sidney Hatch ran from Milwaukee to Chicago, 95.7 miles, in 14 hours, 50 minutes, 30 seconds.

I wonder how far a man can run in a day? On February 27, 1882, in Madison Square Garden, New York, an Englishman, Charles Rowell, ran 150 miles in 22 hours, 28 minutes, 25 seconds. What made this more amazing was that he intended it to be only the first in a six days' race. As it was he established a world's record for one day; he could have gone farther had he been trying for a 24-hour run.

Nor is there any good in talking about "modern history" as if the ancients were superior. Were all the champion athletes of Greece and Rome in B. C. days to enter a modern track meet, not one of them would be placed.

At last the New York *Times*, which, in an age of "features," has contented itself with being a great newspaper—which it assuredly is—has taken unto itself a columnist. At first I thought this was to be sporadic. But after many months, it looks like a feature indeed. The *Times* has a columnist, and having decided on that policy, it secured a first-rate one, Will Rogers. This shrewd humorist, who has added happiness to many lives, has published his collected oral and written contributions in a volume called "Letters of a Selfmade Diplomat to his President." This is full of mirth and full of sense; I guess that Mr. Rogers himself knows the

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best thing in it, for he quite properly prints it in capitals:

I could have prevented this whole debt argument, and all this hatred would never have come up. I WOULDENT HAVE LET THEM HAD THE MONEY IN THE FIRST PLACE!

"Oh, John, if only you could laugh at me," said Maggie. I believe that the English as a nation have the best sense of humor in the world, with the Americans a good second; if we could change our jeers into laughter, it would clear the air. Perhaps Mr. Rogers will be our most important diplomat.

Another great and lovable American humorist, Bill Nye, comes back to us from the grave—"Bill Nye. His Own Life Story. Continuity by Frank Wilson Nye." This is a good book on a good man. James Whitcomb Riley often alluded to Bill Nye with affection. I wish he might have lived to see this book. It would have pleased him.

Perhaps no group of writers ever had more spirited conversations than Flaubert, Turgenev, the Goncourts, Sainte-Beuve, Gautier, Renan, Taine, and others at the Magny dinners. Art was their religion, and their debates were tempestuous. These dinners and other things are well described in a new book called "Gautier and the Romantics," by John Garber Palache, which incidentally contains some penetrating criticism. I do not wholly agree, however, with the remark that Gautier's "appeal is chiefly to the artistic eye, rather than to the heart or mind." I think his chief appeal is to something that has nothing to do with heart, eye, or mind. It is an interesting fact, pointed out by Mr. Palache, that the great French writers, 1820–1875, are divisible into two groups—those who cared mainly for style and form, and those who cared mainly for life. In the first were Gautier, Merimée, Baudelaire, the Goncourts, Flaubert, and Leconte de Lisle; in the second, Hugo, Balzac, Dumas, and George Sand. But what a collection! And in this outburst of creative activity, lived and worked a critic of genius. Only a very few of these writers are diminishing; does any one now read George Sand, except in required courses of study? But is it possible to imagine any future time when there will not be readers for Hugo, Dumas, Balzac, Flaubert, and Merimée?

At last I have seen the most remarkable stage-play of the twentieth century—"Abie's Irish Rose." I went because I wished to see if I could understand the secret of its popularity. I went in no superior or hypercritical mood; I wished to enjoy it and to share the crowd's enjoyment, as I have no difficulty in doing at the circus. I was joyous, receptive, eager. The house was packed to the last inch, and as the curtain rose I felt at peace with all mankind. I went away at the close in a state of depression. I felt as though I had been inartistically sandbagged, suffering the agony of repeated blows without the blessed relief of unconsciousness. "Abie's Irish Rose" is what the critics said it was when they heard the first performance; it is imbecile. Not for a moment do I believe that its phenomenal financial success is a score off the professional reviewers. The joke is not on the critics; the joke is on the public. I have not been so bored since I saw my last musical comedy.

Browning is the most dramatic poet, except Shakespeare, in English literature, though he was not so good a playwright as Shaw or Barrie or Galsworthy or Ervine. His plays, however, are better than those who have not seen them pronounce them to be. The Neighborhood Playhouse made a success with "Pippa Passes"; Otis Skinner, Eleanor Robson, and Mrs. Lemoyne made a deep and lasting impression with "In a Balcony"; Mrs. Lemoyne and Grace Elliston aroused immense enthusiasm with "A Blot in the 'Scutcheon." But it is possible that in the future Browning will hold the stage mainly by dramatized versions of his poems.

Walter Hampden, to whom the modern drama owes so much, has produced in his own theatre at New York "Caponsacchi," made from "The Ring and the Book," by Arthur Goodrich and Rose A. Palmer. It is a tragedy, and in verse, Browning's own lines being kept wherever possible. Instead of being a meritorious bore, it is thrilling. It is beautifully mounted by Claude Bragdon, who de-

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signed all the scenery. Mr. Hampden has never done better acting; it is a delight to see and hear him. The cast is adequate, particularly in the important rôles of Pompilia, Canon Conti, and the Pope. Do not miss this performance, for it is one of the most important events of the season. The prodigious success of Helen Hays in Barrie's "What Every Woman Knows" is not only a very good thing in itself, but I hope it means that she will give us a Barrie cycle; without employing the work of any other playwright, there are sufficient opportunities in the dramas of that man of genius to display the resources of this brilliant actress for many years to come. Winthrop Ames, emboldened by the public response to his impeccable production of "Iolanthe," is now going ahead with "The Pirates of Penzance," which should be the second in a long series. Of the new plays in New York, the most successful is "Broadway," a crude and unimportant melodrama, exceedingly well acted. It seems good by contrast, most of the new plays being quite beneath criticism. Dreiser's "American Tragedy," of which I saw the world-première in New Haven, is a collection of episodes, ending in shallow sentimentality. The best thing about it is its introduction to the stage of Katherine Wilson, who acts the part of Roberta with high intelligence and subtle art—a beautiful interpretation.

Eva Le Gallienne deserves the admiration and support of all lovers of the theatre because of her courage and resolution and energy in establishing a civic repertory theatre. She has taken an old but attractive theatre at 105 West Fourteenth Street, and at very low prices gives excellent plays, with frequent change of bill. In the first few weeks she produced "The Three Sisters," "The Master Builder," "John Gabriel Borkman," "Saturday Night" (by Benavente), and "La Locandiera" (by Goldoni). I wonder if all theatre-goers realize the sacrifice of time, money, and energy this determined young woman is making for the best interests of the drama? She could easily have continued as a matinée idol, and with little effort and above all, *no worry*, could have basked in the sunshine of popularity and have amassed a fortune. She exchanged a life of wealth and ease for one of heart-breaking worry, chronic overwork, and no financial profit; because she rightly believed that New York needed and deserved a repertory theatre. Such courage will, I hope, be rewarded.

The Theatre Guild has also established a repertory theatre, in addition to its other undertakings; this admirable organization has recently revived Shaw's "Pygmalion," the most successful production since it moved into its new and beautiful playhouse at 52d Street.

The late A. B. Walkley, commonly and justly regarded as the foremost English-writing drama critic, lost in his latter days not only some of his prejudices but some of his enthusiasms. He quoted with approval Professor Walter Raleigh's comment on Ibsen.

> Ibsen represents very exactly all that I most dislike. The Evangelist with a wooden leg! They are praising him up to the skies now. But he won't wash. He never took delight in anything but his own mop-headed, whiskered, methodical self. I'm glad he's dead. Some good people liked his books. He caught them on their stupid side.

I wonder why it is that the majority of people love to read a violent attack on a book or an author, love it so much more than they love praise? Is it because the common herd rejoice at any attempt to belittle, befoul, or bludgeon a great man? Raleigh says some good people liked his books—liked his *books*. Ibsen was a playwright—did Raleigh ever see one of his plays? Raleigh's disposal of Ibsen may be funny in a grotesque way, but it betrays stupid, insular ignorance and prejudice. Mr. Walkley's comment is singularly assuming and inept. "I take Ibsen himself to be as dead as mutton. . . . The rare revivals of him in London have been hole-in-corner affairs." As though the opinion of London theatre-managers and West End audiences had any value or weight in determining what is and what is not important in the drama! In Germany Ibsen is very much alive; and if Professor Raleigh and Mr. Walkley could have seen the New York performance of "The Wild Duck," in 1925, they might have learned something. It is true that Ibsen is no longer a sensation; he is no

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longer a sensation because, like Shakespeare, he is a classic.

Two books of high value for those who follow contemporary drama and verse, are Burns Mantle's "The Best Plays of 1925–26," and William Stanley Braithwaite's "Anthology of Magazine Verse, 1926." Mr. Braithwaite has performed many valuable services in the cause of poetry; the amount of labor bestowed on this latest tome is almost terrifying. Yet it is all so carefully and thoroughly indexed that the reader can find immediately anything he wants—except, alas, great poetry. But that is not the fault of the compiler, and it is well to know the truth.

In the November *American Mercury*, there is an article on "The New York Dailies," by Hugh Kent, in which, after praising *The Sun* for its news and financial prosperity, he says: "You never see its editorials quoted, but what of that?" Now the *Sun* editorial on "The Country Store," commenting on Bruce Barton's interview with President Coolidge, and its editorial on Kipling's poem on America, were worthy of the best traditions of that paper, and I know no higher praise, *n'est-ce pas*, Mr. Mitchell? That interview, by the way, which appeared everywhere last September, was a triumph of American journalism. *The Sun* had a long and brilliant editorial commenting on the old-fashioned American crossroads country store, which, Mr. Editor, is *not* obsolete. Not far from my house in Michigan stands the country store of William Pottinger, which runs absolutely true to form. *The Sun* omitted one of the most delightful characteristics of the country-store emporium—the smell. I like the smell of the country store—it is compounded of the ingredients of coffee, tea, gingersnaps, cheese, candy, leather, brooms, dry-goods, cream-cans, brown sugar, spices, and the glorious, sweetish, pungent odor of chewing-tobacco.

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# THE FIELD OF ART

BY ROYAL CORTISSOZ

IN the crowded New York art season there occasionally occurs an exhibition in which, as the saying goes, there is more than meets the eye. Vistas are opened. Old memories are reawakened. Such an exhibition was held at the Higgs Gallery this winter, a little show of ten paintings by the late Frank Duveneck. Decidedly there was more in them than met the eye. Besides being good paintings they revived the tale of an old tradition, one that is still felt in American art, but is also more or less obscured. Our debt to France is a heavy one, but it is not by any means all that we owe to Europe. When foreign criticism wants to be very friendly and patronizing toward us—and it is not infrequently disposed to that impulse—it is wont to characterize American art as an offshoot from the French school, as though nothing had ever happened here not directly traceable to the influence of Parisian training. As a matter of fact we went to Munich before we went to France in any concerted sense, and, apropos of this Duveneck exhibition, it is interesting to recall some incidents and personalities from a salient chapter in our artistic history.

♣ ♣ ♣

THE drift to Munich dates from as far back as the 'sixties, when David Neal and Toby Rosenthal went over. In less than ten years thereafter Frank Duveneck put the Bavarian city on the map, so to say, for the new American painter. William M. Chase had an important share in this transaction and, indeed, if I am not mistaken, was actually earlier on the ground. But Duveneck was the prime initiator of the American tradition springing from Munich. He was a Kentucky man, born at Covington in 1848 and growing up under the tuition of German painters in Cincinnati. He seems to have begun as an ecclesiastical mural painter. What his work then was like I do not know, but it must have had talent in it. We find him a pupil in the Royal Academy at Munich in 1870, his biographer, Norbert Heermann, noting that it took him only three months at the antique to emerge into the painting class. At that moment Piloty and Makart were prevailing, but Duveneck found his predestined leader in Dietz and with his sympathy he sat at the feet of the old masters, especially Rembrandt and Hals. When he came back to America three years later the pictures he brought with him made a great stir not only in Cincinnati but in Chicago and Boston. In Boston they bought all his works and wanted him to stay. Instead he went back to Munich, travelled in Italy, and in the late 'eighties was settled in Bavaria again, where he opened a kind of academy of his own. Young Americans flocked to his standard, and from that period, in Munich, in Florence, and in Venice dates the steady growth of the influence which was to be advanced by "Duveneck's Boys." One of the painter's old pals, George H. Clements, who shared a studio with him for several years, gives me some delightful reminiscences of the atmosphere in which that influence was developed. He says:

> Hiking from Paris to Italy I dropped into a café in Florence and found myself facing Duveneck and a group of his satellites, including Julius Rolshoven. Duveneck was the handsomest yellow-haired Norseman I had ever seen and his temperament matched. I was bound to tramp to Naples, but he persuaded me to stop. He became my champion and brother, as he was to all the boys. He and Rolshoven hired a villa on the Poggio Imperiale and I joined one of the classes and taught water-colors. Etching was a fad. I designed a big wooden press which answered perfectly. Opposite was the sculptor's studio of Thomas Ball and his son-in-law, Will Couper. The home was one of music and social distinction. On Mondays the press was wheelbarrowed across for a monotype evening—accompanied by music. . . . Our little lunch-room was adorned with compositions and comic sketches by Duveneck. He was a good actor and the life of costume parties. He painted a few portraits, especially of children, of whom his love was ardent.
>
> In the spring he and I went to Venice and shared a studio. He etched and painted spas-



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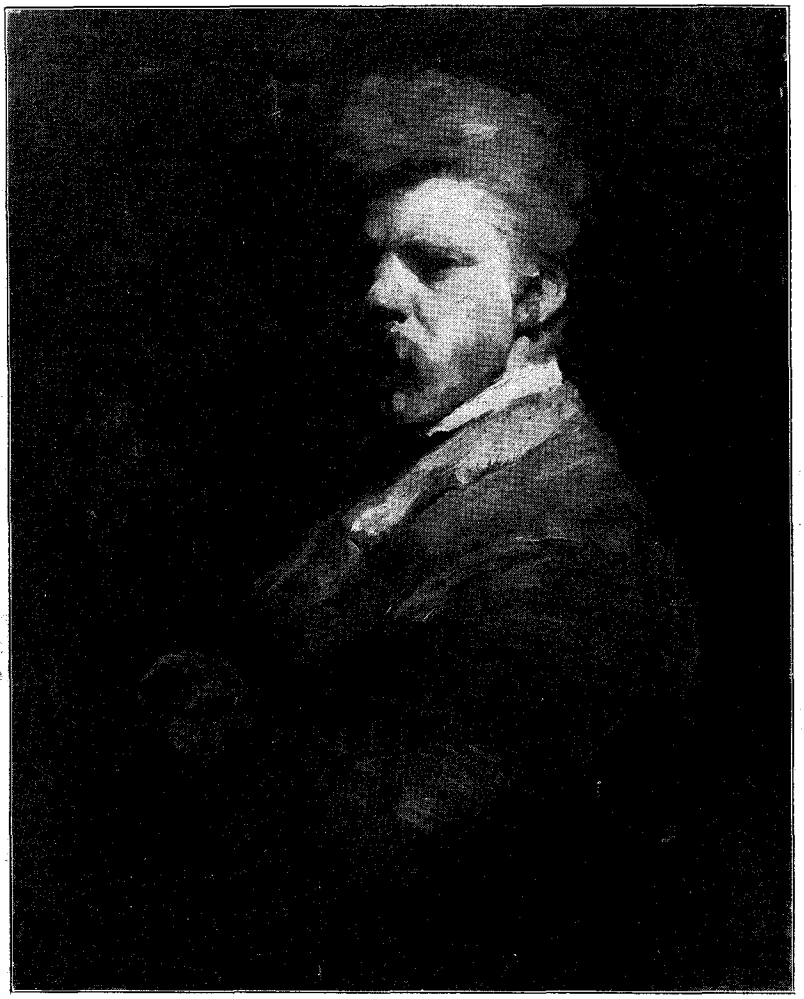
modically and toiled over gorgeously laid-out pictures. Evenings we spent in cafés. I got all busy by providing paper and pencil. It was amusing to see all reaching for materials. The pencils were heavy and black. Duveneck was best of all and the most hilarious. Blum next.

Sargent. "After all's said," ran the tribute, "Frank Duveneck is the greatest talent of the brush of this generation." Precisely. Of the brush. He was a prodigious virtuoso and what he inculcated



Frank Duveneck.
From the portrait by himself in the Cincinnati Museum.

THIS gives us a perfect glimpse of the easy, happy life into which Duveneck welcomed a rising generation and made it free of his secret. What was his secret? It was prefigured by Hokusai, who called himself "the old man mad about painting." Mr. Heermann opens his charming monograph with a remark once made by in his numerous disciples was nothing more nor less than a consuming passion for the sheer manipulation of paint. Whistler once said to Otto Bacher in Venice: "Paint should not be applied thick. It should be like breath on the surface of a pane of glass." How Duveneck must have smiled if that axiom ever came his



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way! Paint was used with a lavish hand in his *cénacle*. It was used as the old Dutchmen used it, in a thick impasto.

Woman in Black Scarf.
From the painting by Frank Duveneck in the Cincinnati Museum.

Only the important thing was to use it lovingly, understandingly, so that you gave the genius of pigment its chance and left a painted surface sensuously beautiful. Duveneck was no slap-dash handler of his materials. Save for one reservation, to which I will presently return, he knew with great clarity of vision exactly what he was about. I surmise that one of the things drawing his boys to him was just his painter's wisdom. Vividly do I remember the impression that this left upon me when I met him one night in his later years. It was at a Boston club, where Chase was giving his delightful lecture on Whistler. I had heard of that lecture before, from Whistler himself, who was not quite sure whether it would please him or not and quaintly urged me to go after Chase with a blunderbuss. As a matter of fact it was full of appreciation and a humanly interesting thing which was none the worse for the bits of shrewd criticism it contained. After the talk we sat together over mugs of beer, Duveneck and Chase, the old war-horses, and others like Joe De Camp, who had started among the boys. I can see the veterans now, Chase elegantly leonine and picturesque, piquantly articulate, and Duveneck silvery and quiet, putting in a pregnant word now and then, the grave tenor of which was tempered by the kindly light in his eye. Yes, "wisdom" is the word. I felt him to be a very wise old painter, full of the lore of his craft, full of experience and authority. It was touching to see how Joe De Camp, that genially aggressive soul, looked up to him.

But what of my reservation? It is one that forced itself upon me at the San Francisco Exposition ten years ago. That was a great occasion for Duveneck. He had a big room to himself and all the art juries got together to see that a special medal of honor was struck for him. Nobody could wonder. The room was superb. But your heart sank when you saw one historical fact that it pro-

Young Girl.
From the painting by Frank Duveneck shown at the Higgs Gallery.

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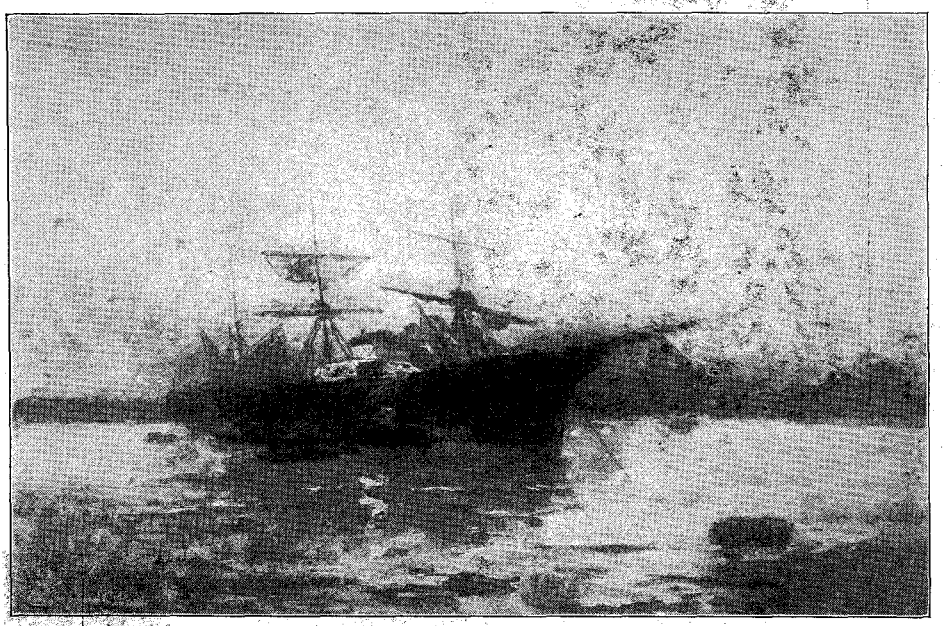
claimed, that in the old Munich days the Duveneck tradition had wallowed in bitumen, and with the passage of the years the sins of that treasonous medium had come home to roost, covering many a beautiful canvas with a network of cracks. It is, I verily believe, the only matter in which Duveneck's wisdom ever failed him. His transposition of the "brown sauce" of Rembrandt would have triumphed utterly if it had not been for that single lapse. As it is his victory remains extraordinarily impressive. To see it in its length and breadth it is desirable to go to Cincinnati, where about a hundred of his paintings and studies are assembled in the Museum. They were, by the way, gathered together there in a curious manner. A quarter of a century before he died Duveneck taught in the Cincinnati Academy. Besides his studio there he had one in the attic of the Museum, adjoining the workrooms of his friends, Meakin and Barnhorn. In the Museum studio he accumulated rolls of old canvases he had painted abroad. They curled and in some cases stuck together. Impatient with their refractory behavior he calmly proceeded to hurl them into the furnace. Fortunately Meakin intervened and little by little these waifs and strays got themselves flattened out, stretched, framed, and hung up in the Museum. That settled it for Duveneck. With the large generosity that was part of his nature he regarded these salvagings as the property of the institution. In the long run he got deeply interested, realizing the help that his work might be to students. I like what my friend John Gest, the director of the Museum, writes me about Duveneck's feeling toward the collection.



At Anchor, Venice.
From the painting by Frank Duveneck in the Cincinnati Museum.

"There was absolutely no vainglory about it," he says, "no selfish desire for reputation, no exalted notion of the value of his work, but a simple, frank, generous wish that his own experience in the use of paint might be helpful to others." He was always quite unconscious of his own pre-eminence. "That his work was good, yes, as good as he could make it, but that it was so extraordinary he admittedly had no thought at the time he did it, but only in his later years, when

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we put the question to him, he quietly accepted it for what it was worth."

I have said that Cincinnati is the Mecca for the student of Duveneck's art. Nevertheless a single canvas of his will show you what his work is worth. The other day in a collection of American portraits at the Century Club there turned up one of Duveneck's, painted from William Gedney Bunce, in Munich, in 1878. I knew Bunce long afterward, when he had of course greatly changed, but instantly, in the presence of this canvas, I had an eerie feeling of being once more in the presence of my old friend. There you come close to another of Duveneck's secrets, his powerful grip upon life. It was powerful and, by the same token, it was sometimes marvellously delicate. A gem in the exhibition at the Higgs Gallery was a certain Young Girl, a head-and-shoulders portrait done on a small scale. In the lower part of the canvas Duveneck was the robustious brushman, but the wistful, refined face of the model was drawn with a searching tenderness. That

Woman with Forget-Me-Nots.
From the painting by Frank Duveneck in the Cincinnati Museum.

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was like the artist. He wasn't a man of imagination and he left no great compositions behind him, but he was profoundly sensitive. Every now and then in his ity. But it is a dexterity humanized by a warmly sympathetic emotion and it is deep-rooted in the rectitude of art. They did things in the Duveneck régime that

Young Man with Ruff.
From the painting by Frank Duveneck in the Cincinnati Museum.

*œuvre* you come upon some such characterization as this Young Girl, subtle to the point of exquisiteness, and you marvel at the strong technique that could thus adjust itself to a fragile, fleeting mood. In the main, however, Duveneck is all for a magnificent bravura and the world well lost. His paintings are so many affirmations of an exultant dexterought nominally to have left them dry as mummies. They would not only try to paint in the manner of Hals, but would clothe the model in the dress of one of the master's sitters and paint with one eye on a photograph of the portrait in question. It seems deadly, doesn't it? But to Duveneck these expedients were only so much machinery and all the time he

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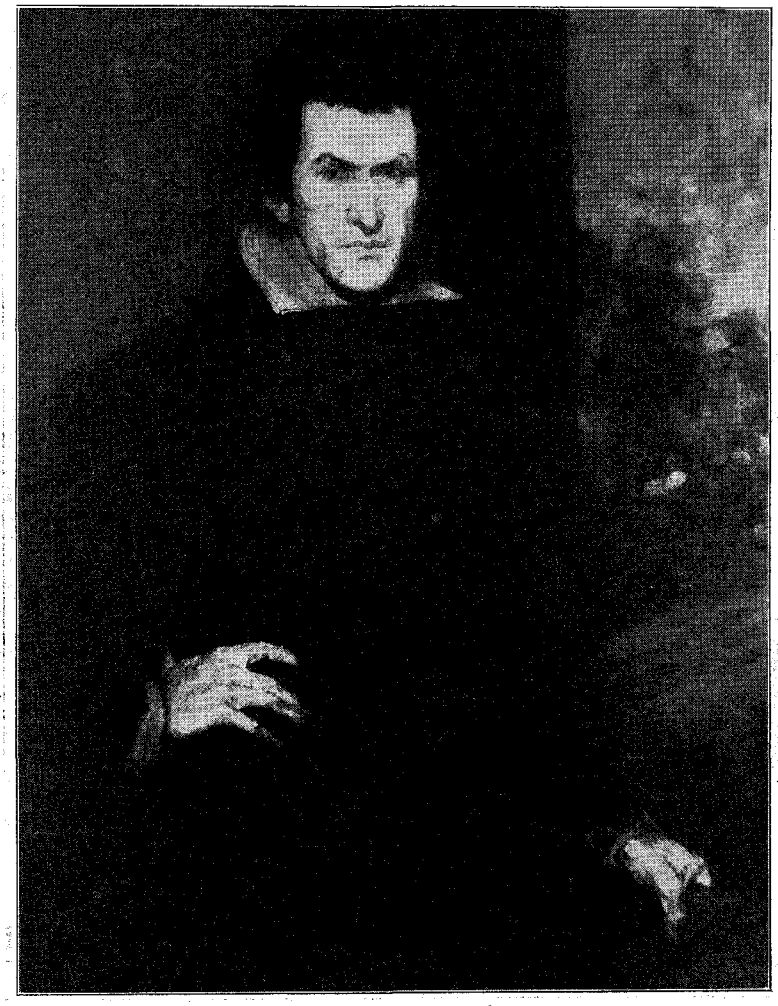
taught his pupils to hold fast to the vitalizing principles of truth and beauty. He kept them faithful to the living model and used the machinery only as a means of developing the joyous magic of brush and paint. He made them not copyists but painters.



J. Frank Currier.
From the painting by William M. Chase in the collection of Mrs. Chase.

* * *

THERE is an interesting way of confirming this hypothesis. That is by glancing at the histories of some of his disciples. I have foregathered with a number of them, Blum, De Camp, Alexander, Twachtman, and others, and never did I perceive in his circle the faintest sign of his ever having sought to rear up a brood of "little Duvenecks." All that he cared about was to see that they got hold of the root of the matter, to foster in them a love for the art of painting for its own sake. Blum drew inspiration from him, but he drank as freely of the inspiration he found in Fortuny. De Camp was his own man. Alexander, one of the most devoted of Duveneck's boys, made

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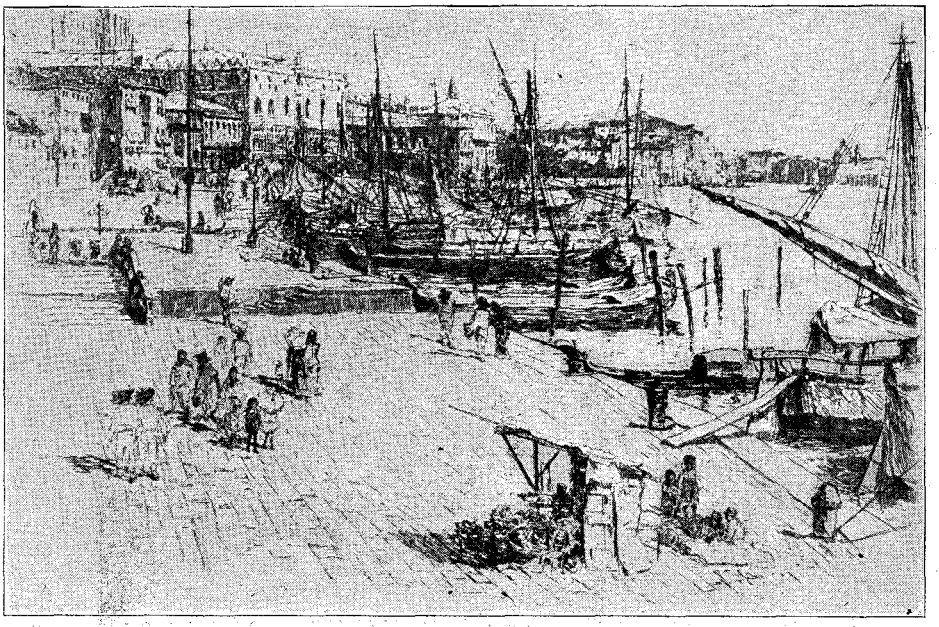
his repute with decorative patterns far more Whistlerian than Duveneckish. As for Twachtman, he went out into the open air with Monet, turning his back on Duveneck's studio light and muted harmonies, and became a consummate impressionist. I remember going from the Duveneck room at San Francisco to the one given to Twachtman. They stood



Riva Degli Schiavoni, Venice.
From the etching by Frank Duveneck.

for two totally different worlds. But they rested on the same foundation. There must have been something fundamental, something organic about an influence that could steep a man in "brown sauce," yet leave him free to strike out in new seas and find his salvation upon shores of his own. Much depends, of course, in such circumstances, upon the man himself, but everything in a sense depends also upon the teacher and his genius for giving the right direction and the right impetus to the gifts submitted to his training. There lay Duveneck's great service to his time. He brought his boys to a way of thinking and feeling about nature and art, and, as I cannot too often reiterate, he cultivated in them a sense of the thrilling excitement, the joy and the dignity, to be got out of the reverent exercise of a painter's instruments. He gave technique its true status, underlining its essential beauty. There are lovely romantic things among his paintings, interesting personalities like his Woman with Forget-Me-Nots or like the spirited cavalier of his Young Man with Ruff. There is always personality interpreted in a work of his. His portraits are more significant than such pictures of his as, say, the big Turkish Page in the Pennsylvania Academy. But portrait and picture alike endure because of their surpassing workmanship.

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THAT was Chase's aim as it was Duveneck's, and the names of these two old comrades are allied in nothing more beautifully than in their dedication of their powers to the service of their juniors. They painted together in Munich and

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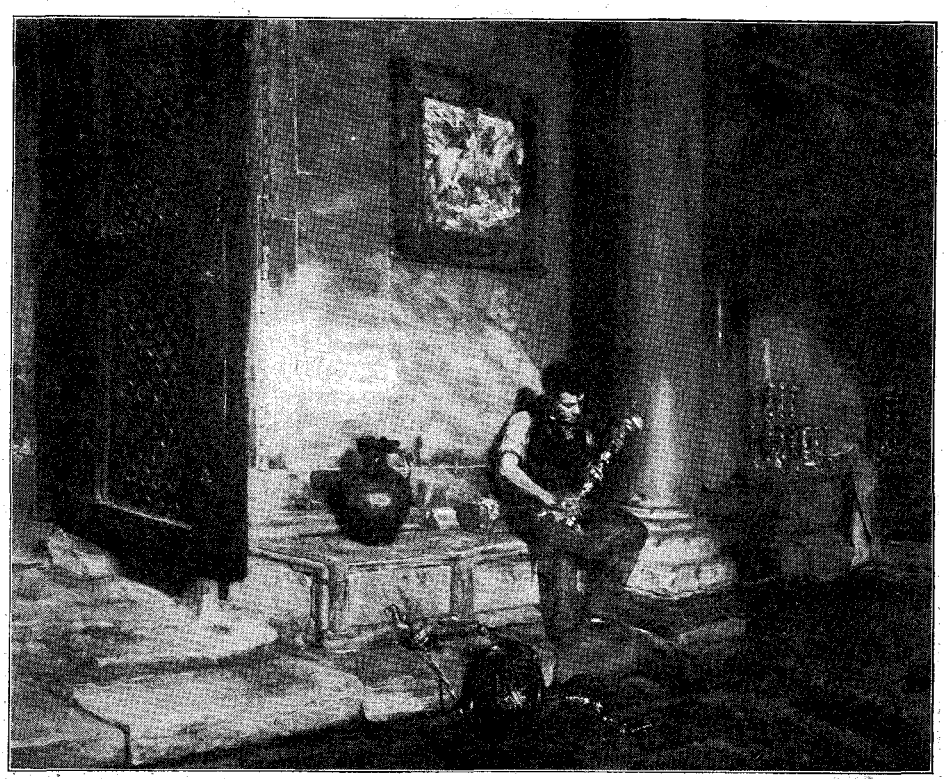

In St. Mark's, Venice.
From the painting by William M. Chase in the collection of John Gest.

Venice and dabbled in the same old-masterish waters. I give among my illustrations one or two souvenirs of Chase's earlier period. They show how, with that susceptible nature of his, he felt the impact of Duveneck's individuality. He had an extraordinary faculty of assimilation, as he was to show later in his contacts with types as different as Velasquez and Boldini. But the central point about Chase as about Duveneck was the pure painter's ardor to which I have so often alluded. Here in the East, in New York at the Art Students League, or in classes of his own on the Shinnecock Hills and in the Prado, he campaigned through precept and example for the probity of art. He trained a whole generation of our painters in a respect for the traditions of a noble craft. And he, again like Duveneck, was a well-spring of wise enthusiasm. It is good to think of the two men so richly endowed, so profuse in production, giving whole-heartedly to those who came to them for help. The energizing principle underlying their influence, the principle of *good, honest painting*, runs like a golden thread through much that is most valuable in American art. What they did for their countrymen should be remembered—and it should be remembered also that they worked out their method, not in Paris but in Munich.

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A calendar of current art exhibitions will be found in the Fifth Avenue Section.



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—See "The Field of Art," page 329.



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